Paying Not to Know: News Avoidance in Times of War

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Abstract

Coverage of the Gaza War varies enormously across the two sides of the conflict, and both sides hold sharply different beliefs about the facts of the conflict. We conduct a survey experiment in Israel and Jordan asking whether individuals avoid news about civilian victims from the opposing side, and how such news would affect them if they were exposed to it. We present several key findings. First, Israeli Jews and Jordanian Arabs are substantially less willing to read about outgroup victims than ingroup victims. Second, news avoidance is driven less by instrumental considerations or universal affective factors, and more by social identity and group norms. Third, reading about outgroup victims increases knowledge, fosters empathy toward the outgroup, and affects policy positions. Fourth, these effects also arise among individuals who would rather avoid such news. Together, our results suggest that avoidance of news about outgroup victims contributes to disagreements about facts and inter-group animosity, and may exacerbate conflict.

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In many conflicts, different sides maintain sharply divergent views about basic facts. These disagreements persist long after the conflict has begun and even when the media is not tightly controlled by the government and factual information is in principle available to all parties. Figure 1 shows survey data we collected among Israeli Jews and Jordanian Arabs in the spring of 2024, more than six months into the Israel-Gaza conflict. The numbers show dramatic differences in stated beliefs about basic facts of the conflict. For example, most Israelis say that unarmed Israeli civilians were attacked by Hamas, but they do not believe that thousands of Gazan children were killed in Israeli strikes. Jordanians present a diametrically opposed pattern: almost all of them agree that thousands of Gazan children were killed in Israeli strikes but only 11% say that Hamas attacked unarmed Israeli civilians (the sample and survey are discussed in Section 2).

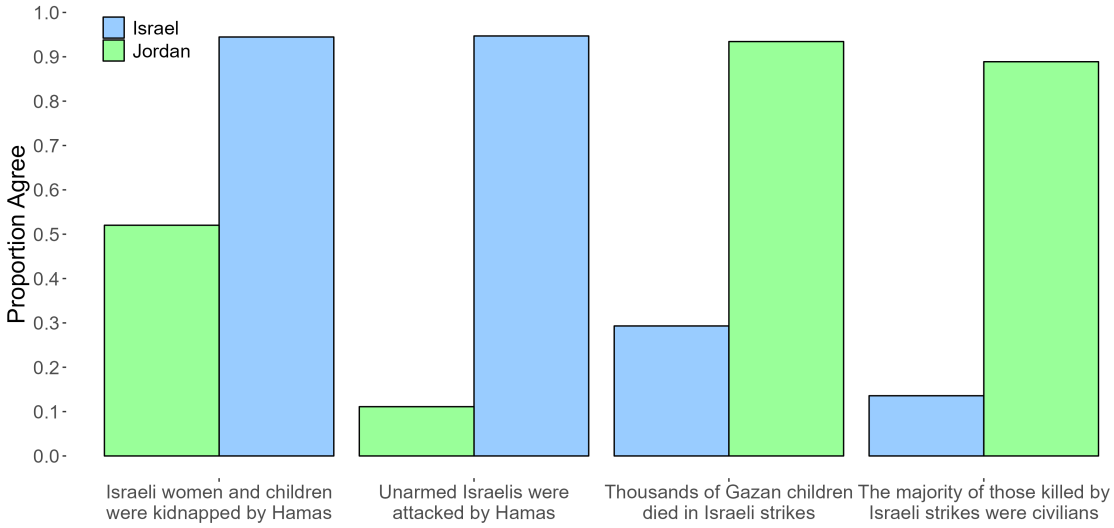
One potential explanation for such persistent disagreements is that news coverage of the same event varies substantially across societies. As we show in Figure 2, in the year following October 7th 2023, only 4-6% of the top headlines in major news sites in Israel and in the Arab world mentioned non-militant outgroup casualties, compared to 24% mentioning non-militant ingroup victims (more details are in Section 1). This raises two questions. First, do the gaps in coverage mirror underlying differences in demand for information across different populations? Second, do these gaps in coverage affect beliefs and attitudes?

This paper asks two questions. First, what news do people choose to consume during times of conflict, what do they choose to avoid, and what can explain these choices? Second, how does exposure to different types of news—including the news that is typically avoided—affect beliefs and attitudes regarding the conflict. We find that both Israeli Jews and Jordanian Arabs systematically avoid news about civilian casualties from the outgroup, and are willing to forgo monetary incentives to do so. This avoidance appears primarily driven by social identity considerations rather than purely instrumental motives or universal emotional responses to negative news. To study the implications or this avoidance, we randomly assign articles about civilian victims from different groups, and incentives to read and comprehend them. We find that avoiding news about outgroup victims may exacerbate conflicts, as articles about the outgroup victims—precisely the articles individuals typically seek to avoid—increase knowledge, foster empathy, and result in less hawkish policy positions.

We establish these results through a series of incentivized experiments conducted in Israel and Jordan during the spring of 2024. Participants are presented with headlines from CNN articles about civilian casualties from various conflicts and disasters.[1] They are told in advance that they will be quizzed about one randomly chosen article and

[1]Each participant draws 18 articles out of 43 potential articles. All articles are about civilian victims, including Israeli, Gazan and Ukrainian victims of conflict, as well as victims of other disasters. The set of 43 articles allows us to explore a rich array of article characteristics, beyond the identity of the victims.

Figure 1: Facts about the ongoing conflict are sharply disputed

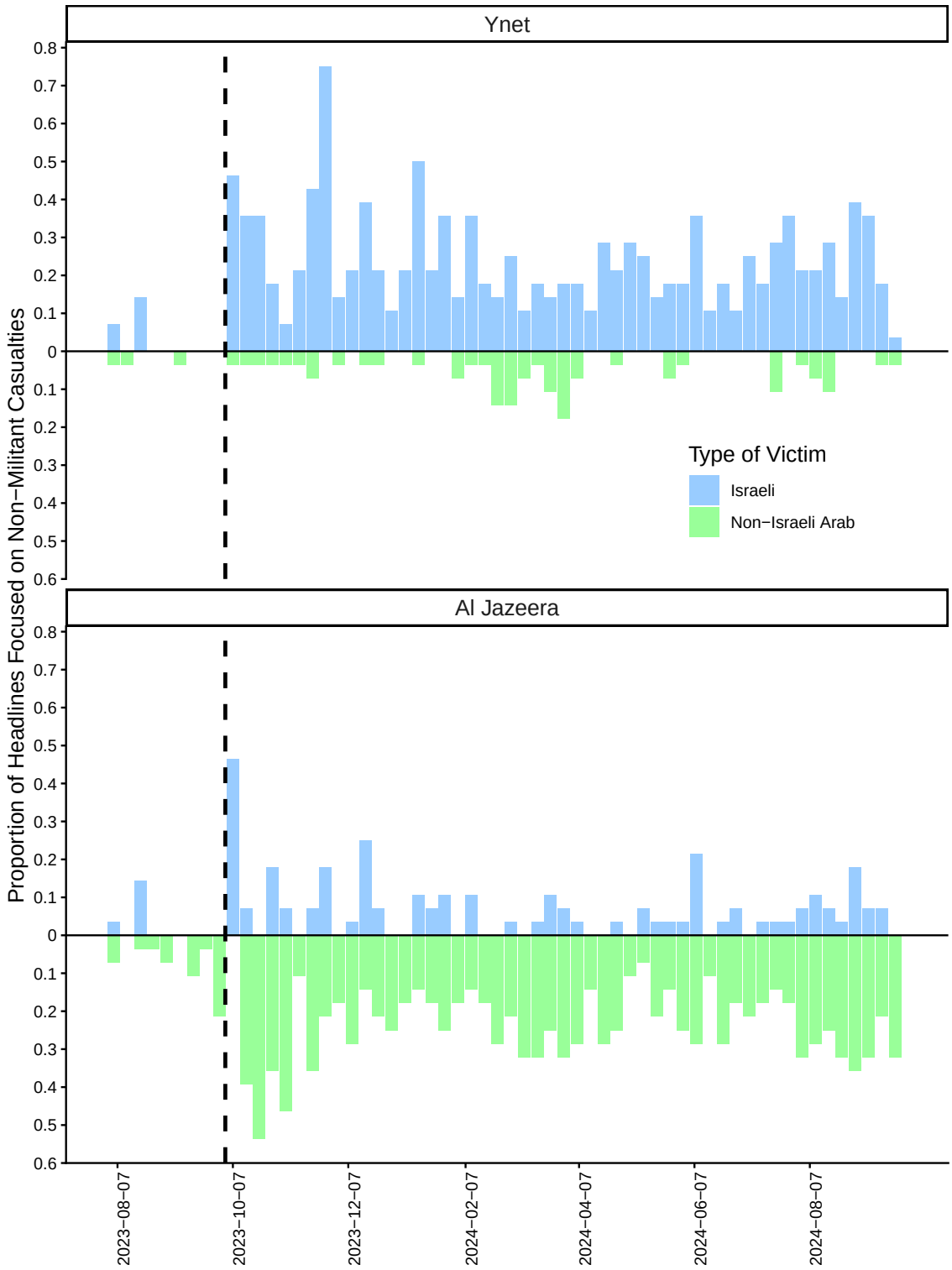


Notes: This figure present the share of Israeli and Jordanian respondents who provided the correct answers when asked whether following statements are true or not: (1) "Dozens of Israeli women and children were kidnapped by Hamas", (2) "Israeli towns were attacked by Hamas, but no unarmed civilians were attacked", (3) "Thousands of Gazan children were killed by Israeli strikes in Gaza", (4) "The absolute majority of those killed by Israeli air strikes in Gaza are Hamas militants and not civilians". The figures present the share who said facts (1) and (3) are true or probably true, and the share who said that facts (2) and (4) are false or probably false. The sample and survey are described in Section 2. The figure only includes participants from the control group.

receive a reward if they answer the quiz correctly. They are also told that the article has been assigned a random price and they can only read the article before the quiz if they pay the price. Participants are then asked what is the maximum they are willing to pay to read each article.

Our research design builds on the Becker-DeGroot-Marschak (BDM) (1964) incentive-compatible elicitation mechanism, but also uses the randomization features inherent in the BDM mechanism to study the effect of reading different articles. This design has several important advantages for our research question. First, it allows us to precisely measure willingness to pay (WTP) for reading different types of news articles while fixing the monetary reward for doing so. Second, if participants are exposed to an article (when their stated WTP is higher than the randomly drawn price), they have a clear incentive to read it in order to pass the quiz and receive the monetary reward. Therefore, we measure how much participants are willing to pay to actually *read* the article, and not just be exposed to it. Third, the monetary reward allows us to back out the individual's willingness to forgo monetary payoffs in order to avoid reading certain articles, and thereby examine whether—and which—individuals are willing to give up money to not read about outgroup victims. Fourth, the headlines all appear as they do when shared on Facebook (with added Hebrew or Arabic translation) making the decisions by participants somewhat similar to decisions they often make in the real world: While individuals

Figure 2: Media Coverage of Non-Militant Fatalities



Notes: This figure shows the share of Ynet and Al Jazeera headlines covering non-militant conflict victims. The blue dark bars present coverage of Israeli victims and the light green bars present coverage of non-Israeli Arab victims, aggregated at the weekly level. We manually classified the top two headlines appearing on the homepage of these news sites every day in the morning and the evening (in total four articles per day per news site). Articles that cover both types of victims appear twice in the figure.See Appendix B.1 for details.

typically do not pay (in money) for individual articles, they often scroll through various headlines on social media and decide which ones to click and read. Fifth, by including the same headlines in both Jordan and Israel, we can estimate the difference in demand for ingroup and outgroup victim articles after controlling for article fixed effects, as the same article can be about ingroup victims in Israel (Jordan) and about outgroup victims in Jordan (Israel). The article fixed effects allow us to isolate the demand for different articles after taking into account the headline style, image, story discussed, or other idiosyncratic factors that may affect demand for a specific article.

Sixth, the implementation of the BDM mechanism involves randomly assigning prices to different articles. This generates exogenous variation in the likelihood that individuals read about ingroup, outgroup, or other victims. In turn, this variation allows us to identify the effect of reading these articles on attitudes, beliefs, and behavior. Finally, we can examine whether the response to reading news about outgroup (vs. ingroup) victims is systematically different among those individuals who do not want to read such articles.

Our first main finding is that both Israeli and Jordanian participants systematically avoid articles about civilian casualties from the other side of the conflict. Individuals are much more likely to give up monetary rewards when these entail reading about outgroup victims. The average (within-individual) gap in WTP between articles about ingroup and outgroup victims is substantial, equivalent to about 35-50% of the WTP for neutral articles. The gap is larger in Israel compared to Jordan, perhaps because Israel is an active side in the conflict, but exists in both samples, and when controlling for article fixed effects. While the ingroup-outgroup WTP gap varies by some individual-level characteristics, a large gap in WTP exists across all the demographic groups we study.

We explore several mechanisms that could explain this systematic avoidance of outgroup victim news, compared to ingroup victim news: monetary considerations, other instrumental consideration, affective motives, and social identity factors. To help disentangle these channels, we conduct an additional survey asking participants from the same sampling frames to classify the article headlines on several dimensions. We also leverage differences across individuals as well as participants' detailed self-reported rationales. Monetary considerations cannot explain our results. Participants are willing to pay less for outgroup articles, even though they believe that reading those articles will increase the odds of receiving the reward more than reading ingroup articles. . Other instrumental considerations are also unlikely to explain our results. Participants show a higher WTP for stories judged by their peers as more familiar, in contrast to a standard model which would expect individuals to seek new information, where they have weaker priors. Furthermore, we include both new and old headlines in the set of articles presented to participants and find a large WTP gap even for old articles that are unlikely to contain relevant information.

The evidence is also inconsistent with universal affective motives (e.g., seeking to

avoid sad articles). Individuals are willing to pay more for article that are expected to evoke negative feelings, and indeed report feeling more sad after reading an article about ingroup victims.

Instead, the evidence appears driven by identity-centered cognitive dissonance (avoiding information threatening one's group attachment) and by social norms regarding what ingroup members ought to read. First, the gap in WTP is strongly associated with the strength of participants' subjective national identification. Second, we find that individuals are willing to pay more for articles that are perceived as important for people in the ingroup to read, and that controlling for this dimension closes most of the ingroup-outgroup WTP gap. Finally, the most common consideration that individuals say explains their WTP is related to social norms, i.e., that it is important that people in their group read certain things.

These results immediately raise the question: Is news avoidance consequential? Perhaps people who avoid news, would not be affected by such news anyway. Indeed, exposure to such news might even backfire. We therefore examine its consequences by randomly assigning participants different types of articles along with a price. The vast majority of participants receive either the minimal price of 0, ensuring that they are exposed to the article, or the maximal price of 100, meaning they are almost never exposed to the article (unless their WTP was 100). Participants are randomized to one of three articles: an article about Israeli victims, an article about Gazan victims, and a neutral article about Chinese victims of a natural disaster.

We first study the effects of exposure to the article on comprehension and recollection. Recent papers have theorized that even when individuals are exposed to the same information, they process it differently and may even suffer from biased memory (Amelio and Zimmermann, 2023). Since all participants randomly assigned the article are asked the quiz questions, even when the price is higher than their WTP and they are not exposed to the article, we can analyze how exposure affects comprehension. As expected, we find that being exposed to the article increases comprehension substantially, meaning that individuals actually read and understood the articles presented to them. Reading about ingroup victims increases comprehension more than reading about the outgroup, but the differences are not dramatic and exposure to outgroup articles also increase comprehension substantially. To study recollection and persistence, we conduct a follow-up survey 1-7 days later and ask participants the same comprehension questions along with new comprehension questions about the article. We do not find evidence for biased memory. The effect of exposure to the article in baseline on comprehension in the follow-up survey is similar among participants assigned to ingroup and outgroup victims. These results suggest that when individuals are exposed to news (and have a small incentive), they read and understand news that in other circumstances they may avoid.

The fact that most individuals read and understood the articles allows us to estimate

the effect of the content on attitudes and behavior. We focus on three preregistered outcomes: knowledge, empathy, and policy attitudes, and compare the effects of reading about outgroup victims compared to ingroup victims. Unfortunately, we are underpowered to detect effects among the small Jordanian sample, and therefore, this section of the paper focuses on the Israeli sample.[2] We find that reading about Gazan civilian victims significantly affects our outcomes. First, the article increased the share of Israelis agreeing that thousands of children were killed in Gaza, but did not affect the other knowledge question mentioned in Figure 1. Second, reading about Gazan victims, compared to Israeli victims, also increased the share of Israelis who say that Israel should take into account the suffering of the Gazan civil population during combat. Third, we find implthat exposure to outgroup victims increases empathy—feeling sorry for the suffering of some Gazan civilians hurt in the war. The effects are substantial. For example, the Intention-To-Treat (ITT) effect on feeling sorry for the suffering of Gazans is seven percentage points, compared to a baseline of 30%.

To analyze whether reading also affects behavior, we ask participants whether they want to donate to one of two charities. Both charities operate in both Israel and Gaza, along with many other countries, and we randomize the countries we mention when describing the charities. We always mention that both charities operate in the ingroup country (Israel) but randomly mention that one of the charities also operates in the outgroup country (Gaza). We find that reading about outgroup victims significantly increases the share of participants donating to the charity that also helps outgroup victims.

Finally, we combine the WTP estimates with the randomization of articles to study whether the effects of reading articles vary by the demand for them. We find the exposure to the article about outgroup victims had significant effects even for participants who tended to avoid it. Moreover, the effects on knowledge, empathy, and policy positions are not significantly smaller among these participants. This implies that selective exposure plays a meaningful role in maintaining gaps in knowledge and attitudes across societies, and that exposure to news about the outgroup can affect even people who typically avoid such information. In terms of policy, this result suggests that making the supply of information less one-sided during conflicts (perhaps through an NGO campaign or a change in the policy of mainstream channels), could increase empathy and decrease knowledge gaps, potentially promoting deescalation.

This paper contributes to several strands of literature. First, we contribute to research on demand for news (Chopra et al., 2024). Previous papers have shown that individuals

[2]In Jordan, the survey company we worked with was not able to recruit the intended number of valid participants. We still have enough power when analyzing WTP as each observation is a participant-article pair. We can also study comprehension where the treatment effects are expected to be large and we can exploit variation among all participants who were assigned an ingroup or outgroup article. However, we are underpowered to study the effect of ingroup vs. outgroup articles on our primary outcomes as these estimates are based on only 114 Jordanian participants in baseline who were assigned the ingroup or outgroup article *and* a price of zero for the article.

tend to consume like-minded news (Gentzkow and J. Shapiro, 2011; Durante and Knight, 2012; González-Bailón et al., 2023; Braghieri et al., 2024) and discuss potential theories explaining that behavior (Mullainathan and Shleifer, 2005; Gentzkow and J. M. Shapiro, 2006; Chan and Suen, 2008). We provide a new method to estimate the preference for news favorable to one's ingroup and unfavorable to the outgroup. We use this approach to quantify the demand for news about conflict victims but it can be used in other settings as well. In addition, we systematically study the mechanisms explaining the gap in demand for news about ingroup and outgroup victims and show that they relate to norms and social identity, in contrast to obtaining information.[3]

Second, we contribute to a literature studying media effects (Enikolopov et al., 2011; DellaVigna et al., 2014; Adena et al., 2015; Martin and Yurukoglu, 2017; Levy, 2021). Previous studies have shown that information and narratives can affect opinions and empathy (Alesina et al., 2023; Kalla and Broockman, 2023; Andries et al., 2024). We show that a simple and scalable intervention—reading an article about outgroup victims—can increase empathy during wartime. More generally, previous studies have typically analyzed either the demand for news or the effects of news. Our framework combines both of these components in one framework, and thus, allows us to study how the effect of news varies based on demand. We find an effect among people with both lower and higher demand, suggesting that policies increasing exposure can make a difference because even people who avoid news about outgroup victims are affected when they encounter such news.

Our study also relates to research on conflict and asymmetric information. Classical theories highlight how information problems can not only lead to conflict (Fearon, 1995; Gartzke, 1999; Wagner, 2000; Jackson and Morelli, 2011), but also sustain it over long periods (Baliga and Sjöström, 2025). We identify selective news avoidance as a potential mechanism sustaining information asymmetries, even when factual information is technically available to all parties. This provides a novel perspective on why disagreements about basic facts often persist in conflict situations.

Finally we contribute to the growing literature on social identity in economics, building on foundational work by Akerlof and Kranton (2000). Recent studies have demonstrated how social identities affect various economic behaviors (Shayo, 2009; Chen and Li, 2009; Hjort, 2014; Cohn et al., 2015; Atkin et al., 2021). We extend this literature by showing how identity considerations shape information acquisition decisions.

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. Section 1 provides background on coverage of the war. Section 2 describes our experimental design. Section 3 presents results on willingness to pay for different types of news and explores mechanisms. Section

[3]Our results on news avoidance also relate to a literature on information avoidance (Golman et al., 2017). While prior work has documented various motives for avoiding information, including both instrumental reasons (Oster et al., 2013) and psychological factors (Ganguly and Tasoff, 2017), we highlight the role of social identity as a driver of systematic information avoidance.

4 examines the effects of news exposure. Section 6 concludes.

1 Background: Coverage of the War

The Gaza War began on October 7, 2023, when Hamas led a large-scale attack inside Israel, prompting extensive Israeli military operations in the Gaza Strip. It is among the deadliest conflicts of the 21st century: as of late September 2025, over 66,000 Palestinians and over 1,900 Israelis have been killed.

News coverage of the war has been contentious with critics arguing that coverage has often been one-sided. For example, cultural researcher David Gurevitz described Israeli broadcast media as "becoming a propaganda arm of the government, full of populism and fiery patriotism", adding that "what motivates the media is the desire to appeal to the public and get high ratings." (Cohen, 2023)[4] At the same time, over 40% of Israelis say that popular mainstream outlets in Israel itself are biased in favor of the Palestinian population in Gaza (Cohen, 2025), perhaps explaining why reporters self-censor.

To empirically assess differences in coverage, we analyze headlines on Ynet, a leading Israeli online news site, and Al Jazeera, a major pan-Arab news network. Using the Internet Archive, we scraped each site's home page twice daily from August 2023 through September 2024. For each snapshot, we reviewed the top two headlines and coded whether they: (i) covered the war; and (ii) the identity and type of any victims mentioned. For Ynet, we define the outgroup as non-Israeli Arabs;[5] for Al Jazeera, the outgroup is Israelis. Because civilian status is not always identifiable (e.g., the term "martyrs" can refer to civilians or militants), we focus on explicitly non-militant victims. Appendix B.1 provides additional details.

We find that war coverage dominated both outlets, with stark differences in how they treated ingroup and outgroup victims. Overall, 88% of Ynet headlines and 94% of Al Jazeera headlines covered conflicts in the Middle East. However, the composition of the coverage varies dramatically. Figure 2 displays the share of headlines mentioning non-militant victims by week. While in the first week of the war both outlets focused mostly on Israeli victims, coverage quickly diverged thereafter. On Ynet, non-militant Israeli victims appeared in 24% of headlines (about once per day), but non-Israeli Arab victims in only 4% (about once per week). For Al Jazeera, the pattern was nearly the opposite: non-militant Arab victims appeared in 24% of headlines, while Israeli victims were mentioned in only 6%.[6]

[4]Analogous criticisms have been leveled against Arab and Western media outlets such as the New York Times (Pinker, 2025).

[5]About 20% of Israeli citizens are Arab, and dozens of Israeli Arabs were killed by Hamas on or after October 7. We exclude them from the reports of outgroup casualties.

[6]Even when outgroup victims are covered they are often covered differently from ingroup victims. For example, in May 2024 Israel was widely criticized for an airstrike that lit a fire killing dozens of displaced Gazans. Israeli mainstream media covered the outgroup victims, but most articles discussed them from

2 Research Design

We conducted a series of incentivized experiments in Israel and Jordan to measure willingness to pay for different types of news and estimate the effects of news exposure. In this section we discuss our survey design and empirical strategy. We first discuss our primary survey experiment, and then discuss additional surveys and our empirical specification. Figure 3 summarizes the design.

2.1 Primary survey

Our survey is comprised of five main parts: 1) we present participants with various headlines and elicit their willingness to pay to read the associated news articles; 2) we ask a series of baseline demographics and attitude questions.[7]; 3) we assign all participants one of three random articles, and expose some participants to the article based on a random price and their previously expressed willingness to pay; 4) we ask all participants three incentivized knowledge questions about the assigned article 5) we elicit our primary outcomes related to knowledge, policy positions, and empathy.

We recruited our primary sample in spring 2024, with roughly 1,700 Israeli Jews and 200 Jordanian Arabs. In Israel participants were recruited through *Panel4All* and in Jordan they were recruited through *Qualtrics*. While the Jordanian sample is smaller and more selected, limiting statistical power for some analyses, it provides valuable complementary evidence on the generalizability of our findings across conflict parties. The survey firms paid participants for taking the survey and we provided additional bonus payment as detailed in the next section. [8]

We discuss each of the five survey parts below, besides demographics and baseline attitudes, which are straightforward and discussed when relevant.

2.1.1 Elicitation of Willingness to Pay

The core of our design involves eliciting participants' willingness to pay (WTP) for reading different news articles. Participants were presented with headlines from CNN articles about civilian casualties from various conflicts and disasters. For each article, they had to specify their WTP to read it, knowing they will need to answer questions about its content to receive a monetary reward.

We elicited willingness to pay to read articles through a variation of the BDM method (Becker et al., 1964). Participants were told that they are about to see a collection of

an Israeli perspective (e.g., explaining that the strike is being investigated or discussing its effect on the country's legitimacy) and fewer than 10% described the horrific images from Gaza (Persico, 2024).

[7]These are asked at this phase so as not to affect willingness to pay and not be affected by reading articles.

[8]In Israel, the median survey time was 22.73 minutes and the average bonus payment we provided was 3.91 USD. In Jordan the median survey time was 28.08 minutes. Participants in Jordan could only receive the bonus payment if they took the follow-up survey. The average bonus payment was 6.68 USD.

news article headlines, that one article will be chosen at random, and that they would then be presented with three quiz questions relating to it. Participants who answer at least two quiz questions correctly would receive a bonus prize of 90 points.[9] We also told participants that the quiz questions are directly related to the relevant article, and not the general topic, and that (based on pilot studies) "Around 95% of those who read the article answered correctly and got the prize. In contrast, only around 20% of those who did not read the article manage to answer the questions correctly". In other words, we explained to participants that they will probably have to read the article in order to receive the bonus prize.

Participants were told that a random price has been chosen for the relevant article. They were then asked how much they are willing to pay to read it. If their stated WTP for that article is greater than or equal to the randomly chosen price, they would pay the price, get to read the article, and have a high likelihood of answering the quiz questions correctly and winning the reward. If their WTP is less than the price, they would not pay but also would not be able to read the article, and therefore, would probably not answer the quiz questions correctly and not receive the reward. We then asked a series of non-trivial understanding checks to ensure that participants understood the WTP method.

Participants were then asked to state the maximum number of points they are willing to pay in order to read each article with a slider ranging from 0 points to 100 points. They provided their WTP for 19 different articles (18 actual articles and an attention check) knowing that both the article and the cost of reading it are determined by lottery. The payment was taken from an initial participation bonus of either 100 points (Israel) or 450 points (Jordan) ensuring that the participation bonus is never negative. Appendix Figure C.1 presents an example for a screen eliciting WTP. It also show that participants were reminded in every question that the bonus prize is 90 points.

Several features of the design are worth highlighting. First, our method provides an incentive-compatible way to quantify the willingness to pay for different content. Second, participants knew in advance that once they see the article they will have a clear incentive to read it. Therefore, they provided the amount they are willing to spend to actually *read* the full article and not only be exposed to it. Indeed, we show in Section 4.1 that most participants spent considerable time reading the article and received the bonus payment. Third, under reasonable assumption, the 90-point reward allows us to convert our WTP estimate into willingness to forgo monetary payoffs. For example, someone who chose 0 is willing to forgo at least 90 points (with a high probability) in order not to read the article. Fourth, all participants answer quiz questions regardless of whether they read the article, enabling us to estimate effects on comprehension. We believe this method can be

[9]The survey companies we work with provide payment in points. In Israel, 100 points are worth about 10 ILS ($2.70) and in Jordan 1 JOD ($1.41).

used to analyze the demand for and effect of different media content in other contexts as well.

Ensuring high quality answers To make sure participants provided high-quality answers we took the following steps. First, we added the aforementioned understanding check testing whether participants understood the WTP method. The questions composing the understanding check were intentionally not easy (e.g., participants had to calculate their final reward under certain scenarios and understand that they would pay the random price of the article and not the amount they offer), and participants were given three opportunities to answer all of them correctly. Participants who failed three times were screened out. Second, we included an attention check question within the WTP section, shown in Appendix Figure C.2. As participants were gradually shown 19 headlines, one of the headlines states: "This is an attention check. Please mark a maximum price of 41 points". Participants who did not choose to offer 41 were excluded from the experiment.

Article Selection and Characteristics All the articles are CNN news articles about civilian victims of various conflicts and disasters. We focus on CNN since it is a well-known brand that is popular in both Israel and Jordan. This design choice rules out variation in "source utility" or overall source credibility as alternative explanations for our findings.

All of our articles cover civilian casualties. The casualties are Israeli, Palestinian, and Ukrainian conflict victims, and non-conflict related victims from around the world. To vary the possible instrumental value of the articles, we include both recent events (2023) and older incidents (2010s). We only include news-reporting articles and not opinion pieces or explainers, specifically selecting articles that explicitly mention civilian victims of a specific nationality, do not discuss journalists, and focus on the situation on the ground.

External Validity We took two steps to increase external validity. First, we created a pool of 43 potential articles meeting these criteria and randomly selected 18 articles for each participant to keep the survey length reasonable. All participants were shown the attention check and the three treatment articles discussed in Section 2.1.2. The rest of the articles were randomly selected within categories, as shown in Appendix Table A.1. This approach allows us to control for article characteristics while capturing responses to a broader set of news stories. Overall, the articles we included are fairly representative of CNN articles about civilian victims in the Israeli-Gaza conflict and therefore, our WTP estimates for these articles have high external validity, at least with respect to CNN.

Second, the article headlines are displayed in a manner meant to emulate their appearance on social media and are accompanied by the thumbnail picture that appears

when the articles are shared on social media.[10] Appendix Figure C.3 shows an example of how articles are shown along with how they appear when shared on Facebook. The resemblance is meant to invoke the social media landscape. Though the WTP setup is not natural, by making the articles emulate their appearance on social media, we provided participants with a familiar task: they were going through the survey (just as they scroll their feed), viewed the headlines almost exactly as they would appear in their feed, and decided to what extent they are willing to engage with each post.

2.1.2 Randomization and Treatments

Following the willingness to pay elicitation, as per the BDM mechanism, survey participants were randomly assigned an article and the price to read the article. To identify the causal effect of exposure to news about civilian casualties, we leverage the random assignment of articles and prices. The vast majority of participants are randomly assigned to one of three article types (ingroup victims, outgroup victims, or neutral victims) and one of two price levels. At the minimum price (0 points), participants always gain access to the article. At the maximum price (100 points), they almost never gain access given typical WTP levels.[11]

The probability of being assigned each article and price is based on the following distribution (also shown in Appendix Table A.2): a 30% probability of being assigned the minimum price (0) for ingroup victim articles, 30% of being assigned the minimum price for outgroup victim articles, 18% probability of being assigned the minimum price for neutral articles, and 10% each of being assigned the maximum price (100) for ingroup and outgroup articles.[12] A small fraction (2%) received randomly drawn intermediate prices and one of the articles with equal probability. For simplicity, these participants were excluded from the analysis of the treatment effects.

The Treatment Articles Participants were ultimately assigned one of three articles. The article about Gazan victims tells the story of Khaled Nabhan, a Palestinian man who lost two of his grandchildren in an Israeli airstrike in November 2023. The article about Israeli victims recounts the story of Alma Or and Noam Or, two teenagers who were held by Hamas militants and released as part of the 2023 truce agreement, only to find out that their mother has been murdered during the October 7 attacks. The final article describes the aftermath of a deadly earthquake which resulted in over 130 deaths in China's Gansu province. All three articles tell personal stories but also mentioned basic facts throughout. They are fairly similar to other CNN articles about conflict victims.

[10] We make two changes to the figure compared to their social media appearances. First, we add the translation of the headline to Hebrew (in Israel) or Arabic (in Jordan). Second, we add the date of the article.

[11] In only 4% of cases, participants offer the maximum 100 points.

[12] Most of our analysis compares participants who read articles about ingroup versus outgroup victims and, therefore, we set a higher probability to receive a zero price on those articles.

We translated the articles to Hebrew in Israel and Arabic in Jordan and presented the full text of the articles (without any pictures or links). Participants could view the translated version or switch to the original English by clicking a button on the article screen.

2.1.3 Article Comprehension

We wrote five quiz questions for each article, and presented each participants with three of the five questions. The questions were in multiple choice format and participants were presented with four possible answers.

Participants were asked the questions even if they were not exposed to the article (WTP $<$ price), allowing us to estimate the effect of reading the article on comprehension. However, the questions are very specific and it is highly unlikely that participants would know the answer even if they are familiar with the case discussed in the article. For example, the question about the Gazan victims article asks "Khaled describes his granddaughter favorite game, what was the game?". Furthermore, participants had only 60 seconds to answer all three questions and therefore, could not look up the answers. We told participants in advance that they will only have 60 seconds, so they would know that they are required to read the full article, and take this into account when setting the WTP.

Through the paper, we measure *article comprehension* as the share of correct answers to the quiz questions.

2.1.4 Outcomes: Knowledge, Attitudes, and Opinions

Primary outcomes We pre-registered the following outcome variables focused on the effect of reading an article: factual perceptions of the conflict, policy positions towards the war, and empathy towards the outgroup.

Factual perceptions of the conflict are captured through a list of four statements regarding the war. Participants are asked to respond to these statements and indicate on a 5-point scale the likelihood with which they are correct or incorrect. We include two statements about Israeli victims: (I-1) "Dozens of Israeli women and children were kidnapped by Hamas", (I-2) "Israeli towns were attacked by Hamas, but no unarmed civilians were attacked"; and two statements about Gazan victims: (G-1) "Thousands of Gazan children were killed by Israeli strikes in Gaza", (G-2) "The absolute majority of those killed by Israeli air strikes in Gaza are Hamas militants and not civilians". In each category, there is widespread agreement among researchers that the first statement is true, the second statement is false.[13] As anticipated in the pre-analysis plan, virtually all

[13]We refer the reader to the UN OCHA data (https://www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-reported-impact-day-208, https://www.ochaopt.org/content/reported-impact-snapshot-gaza-strip-9-october-2024), the ACLED Initiative's 2024 reports (https://acleddata.com/report/after-year-war-hamas-militarily-weakened-far-eliminated, https://acleddata.com/brief/middle-east-crisis-year-war-numbers), the Tel Aviv University affiliated Institute for National Security Studies

participants already knew the facts related to ingroup victims. Therefore, we focus on the two facts related to outgroup victims. The treatment article about Israeli victims provides information on kidnapped women and children and on unarmed civilians being attacked, and thus, provides facts that can helps participants determine if the statements on Israeli victims are true. The article about Gazan victims mentions in the middle of the article that over 6,000 children died out of over 14,800 Gazans and thus provides information that determines whether the first statement on Gazans (G-1) is true and that can help participants deduce whether the second statement (G-2) is true. . We define *Agreement* as saying a statement is most likely or definitely true, and *Disagreement* as saying it most likely or definitely not true. Those who said they do not know were excluded from both categories.

We measure policy positions based on a question asking participants whether Israel (Hamas) should take into account the suffering of the Gazan (Israeli) civil population during the war. We define *Consider OG Suffering* as saying that suffering should be taking into account to a large degree or very large degree, as opposed to a small degree or not at all.

Empathy toward OG (stated) towards the outgroup is defined as whether participants strongly or very strongly agree with the statement "I feel sorry for the suffering of some [outgroup] civilians hurt in the war".

As pre-registered, we also estimate the effect on an *OG Attitude Index*, which simply sums the number of answers favorable to the outgroup. The index receives an integer between 0 of 4 with participants receiving 4 if they correctly answer the two factual perception questions regarding outgroup victims, support considering the outgroup suffering during the war, and express empathy toward the outgroup.

Donations We also measure empathy based on a donation question with actual stakes (*Empathy toward OG (Donation)*). We ask participants whether they want to make a small donation to Project HOPE, Direct Relief, or neither. Both organizations have activities in the Palestinian Territories as well as in Israel. For each organization, we mentioned three territories in which it operates. We always mentioned the ingroup territory (Israel or Gaza) so participants would never have to choose between donating to an organization helping ingroup victims or an organization helping outgroup victims. We also always mentioned other neutral country where the organizations operate and randomly mentioned either the outgroup territory in the conflict (Gaza for Israelis, Israel for Jordanian) or another third-country. For example, some Israeli participants were

database (https://www.inss.org.il/publication/all-fronts, https://www.inss.org.il/publication/war-data/) and the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies analyses (https://www.dohainstitute.org/en/PoliticalStudies/Pages/al-aqsa-flood-offensive-israeli-strategic-failures-in-gaza.aspx, https://www.dohainstitute.org/en/PoliticalStudies/Pages/western-news-coverage-of-israels-war-on-gaza-in-the-post-truth-era.aspx, https://www.dohainstitute.org/en/PoliticalStudies/Pages/the-future-of-the-war-on-gaza.aspx).

told that Project HOPE *"is active in Uganda, Mexico, Israel and other countries*", while Direct Relief *"is active in the Philippines, Gaza, Israel and other countries*". Other Israeli participants were told Project HOPE "*is active in Uganda, Gaza, Israel and other countries*", while Direct Relief "*is active in the Philippines, Mexico, Israel, and other countries*". Both statements are correct so we did not deceive participants. Our *behavioral empathy* outcome is defined as donating to an organization operating in the introup territory as well as the outgroup country, as opposed to donating to the organization operating only in the ingroup territory, or not donating at all.

2.2 Additional surveys

2.2.1 Follow-up survey

We invited participants to a follow-up survey 1-7 days after our primary survey. In this survey, participants answered all five comprehension questions on the article allowing us to test whether recollection is affected by whether someone reads about their ingroup or outgroup. To measure persistence, we also ask in this survey the self-reported empathy question and the policy question on considering the suffering of the outgroup. The follow-up survey also included some of the secondary outcome questions.

2.2.2 Article classification

To supplement information regarding our chosen articles, we ran secondary, unincentivized, surveys to classify the articles. In surveys among the Israeli and Jordanian participants conducted around the same, participants recruited from the same sampling frame answered the following questions regarding the article headlines: Do you believe the article portrays Israelis/Palestinians positively or negatively? Do you expect the article to evoke negative emotions in you? Are you familiar with the details of the incident covered in the article? Do you expect the information in the article to be credible? Is it important that members of your ingroup read this article? We use these answers to analyze heterogeneity in WTP based on how articles are perceived by the ingroup.

To further classify the articles we conducted two additional surveys in the summer of 2025. The Israeli sample was recruited from the same sampling frame. The Jordanian sample was recruited using the TGM panel. We showed participants articles headlines and asked Israelis how reading each article would affect their commitment to continue the fight against Hamas, their empathy toward the citizens of Gaza, and how proud you are to be Israeli. We asked how would reading each article would affect their commitment to the Palestinian fight against Israel, their empathy toward Israeli citizens, how proud they are of the Palestinian people, and how proud they are to be Arab. We asked both groups whether reading each article would make them anxious, angry, sad, shameful, and whether the article would provide new information.

2.2.3 Auxiliary survey

We used to the 2025 surveys to achieve two additional goals. First, we tested whether participants' agreements with facts regarding the conflict changes in different conditions. Second, we asked additional questions on norms and why it is important to read or avoid articles.

2.3 Empirical Specifications

WTP To estimate the WTP for articles we run specifications of the following form:

$$WTP_{ij} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 IG_j + \beta_2 OG_j + \beta_3 Z_j + \gamma_i + \varepsilon_{ij} \tag{1}$$

where WTP_{ij} is the number of points participant i is willing to pay to read article j; IG_j is an indicator variable for the article being about ingroup victims, and OG_j is an indicator variable for the article being about outgroup victims; γ_i is an individual fixed effect. In some specification we also include article characteristics (Z_j) to analyze mechanisms. ε_{ij} is an error term clustered at the article level. Our main pre-specified test is whether and when $\beta_1 > \beta_2$. When studying heterogeneity, we also add interactions of individual level characteristics and whether the article focuses on IG or OG victims.

Following our pre-analysis plan, we also report an alternative specification where we replace IG_j and OG_j in equation 1 with continuous scores of how positively the article is expected to portray the ingroup and outgroup, respectively. The score is defined as the share of participants in the classification surveys who said each headline covers the groups positively or very positively. This allows us to also capture variation within articles covering the same group.

One potential concern is that WTP for a specific articles might be high because it seems more interesting or attractive (based on the headline or picture), regardless of whether it focuses on ingroup or outgroup victims. A unique feature of our design is that we can control for article fixed effects and still estimate the effect of our main variables of interest on WTP. Since some articles about specific incidents appear as reporting about ingroup victims in one country and outgroup victims in another. Therefore, we also report the following regression:

$$WTP_{ij} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 IG_j + \mu_j + \gamma_i + \varepsilon_{ij} \tag{2}$$

where μ_j is an article fixed effect. This regression only captures differences in articles about Israeli and Palestinian victims (neutral articles will be absorbed by the fixed effects). Therefore, our coefficient of interest in this regression is β_1. This coefficient should be interpreted as the difference in WTP between ingroup and outgroup articles.

Effect of articles on comprehension To analyze the effect of reading an article on comprehension, we compare participants who were assigned a zero price and those who were assigned a price of 100. In this regression, we exclude participants who were assigned the neutral article with a zero price as we do not have a control group for those participants. We run the following regression:

$$Comprehension_i = \gamma_0 + \gamma_1 \cdot ZeroPrice_i + \gamma_2 \cdot IGVictim_i + \gamma_3 \cdot ZeroPrice_i \cdot IGVictim_i + X_i + \epsilon_i \tag{3}$$

γ_1 estimates the effect of being exposed to an article on comprehension and γ_3 measures the differential effect of begin exposed to an ingroup article, compared to an outgroup article. X_i controls for the following pre-registered variables: age, gender, income, religiosity, news consumption habits, position regarding the two-state solution, identification with one's ingroup (defined using both ethnicity and religion), the feeling thermometer gap between the ingroup and outgroup, and survey-week fixed effects. In Jordan we also control for whether the respondent is of Palestinian origin. In Israel we also control for ideology and the party the respondent voted for.

Effect of articles on primary outcomes Finally, to estimate the effect of reading an article on our primary outcome variables, we compare participants exposed to different articles using the following specification:

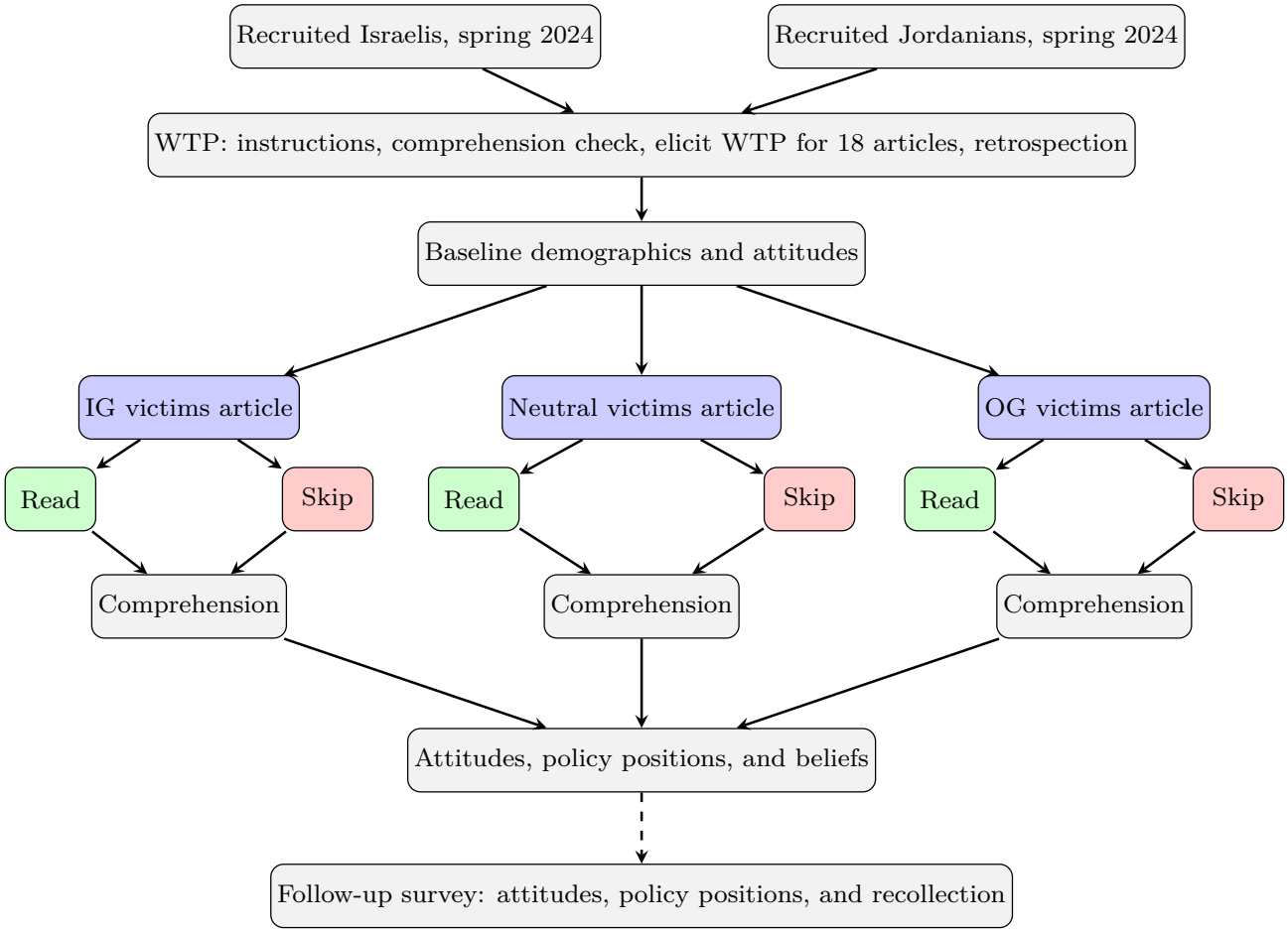
$$Y_i = \delta_0 + \delta_1 \cdot IG\_ZeroPrice_i + \delta_2 \cdot OG\_ZeroPrice_i + X_i + \epsilon_i \tag{4}$$

δ_1 is the effect of being assigned the ingroup article at a zero price and δ_2 is the effect of being assigned the outgroup article at a zero price. We focus on $\delta_2 - \delta_1$, the difference in the effect of ingroup and outgroup articles. Note that the reference group pools both participants who were exposed to the neutral article, and participants who were assigned a price of 100 and were typically not exposed to any article.

2.4 Pre-Analysis Plan

We pre-registered a pre-analysis plan at the AEA RCT Registry (AEARCTR-0015576) The plan included details of our outcome variables, randomization, and specifications. The main deviation from the pre-analysis plan is that the survey company we worked with was not able to recruit enough Jordanian participants who passed our comprehension checks. Since our Jordanian sample is much smaller than intended, we do not have enough power to study the effects of articles on attitudes in Jordan, but can still study WTP for articles in both countries.

Figure 3: Experiment design



This figure presents and overview of our experimental design. Section 2 provides more details.

3 WTP for Ingroup and Outgroup Articles

This section presents the results on demand for news. We first show that there is clear gap in the WTP for ingroup and outgroup articles, and then discuss the mechanisms explaining this gap.

3.1 Willingness to Pay

Our first key finding is that both Israeli Jews and Jordanian Arabs systematically avoid news about civilian casualties from the other side of the conflict, even when this entails foregoing monetary rewards. Figure 4 shows the raw data. Specifically, it presents the distribution of WTP for articles about ingroup victims (top two plots), neutral victims (Ukrainians and non-conflict casualties, middle plots), and outgroup victims (bottom plots).

The dashed vertical lines in the figures provide two useful theoretical benchmarks for the observed WTP numbers. Consider a participant who only seeks to maximize their monetary rewards. If they believe they will win the prize if any only if they read

the article, they should be willing to pay any price below 90 points (an offer strictly above 90 points indicates an interest in the article beyond the reward). A risk-neutral participant who follows the odds we provided (95% odds of getting the reward if they read the article, and 20% otherwise) should be willing to pay any price below 67.5 points (0.95*90-0.20*90). Of course, participants may be willing to pay less than that due to other factors such as risk aversion and the opportunity cost of the time it takes to read the article.[14] Importantly, however, these considerations should apply to all types of articles, regardless of contents.

Empirically, however, Figure 4 shows stark differences across article types. In both countries, a substantial fraction of people are willing to pay close to zero—all but ensuring they don't get the monetary reward—for reading articles about outgroup victims (in Jordan this is also true about Ukrainians and non-conflict casualties). This fraction is much lower when it comes to news about Israeli victims in Israel and about Palestinian victims in Jordan. At the other extreme, more people are willing to pay over 90 points for articles about ingroup victims than about outgroup victims.[15]

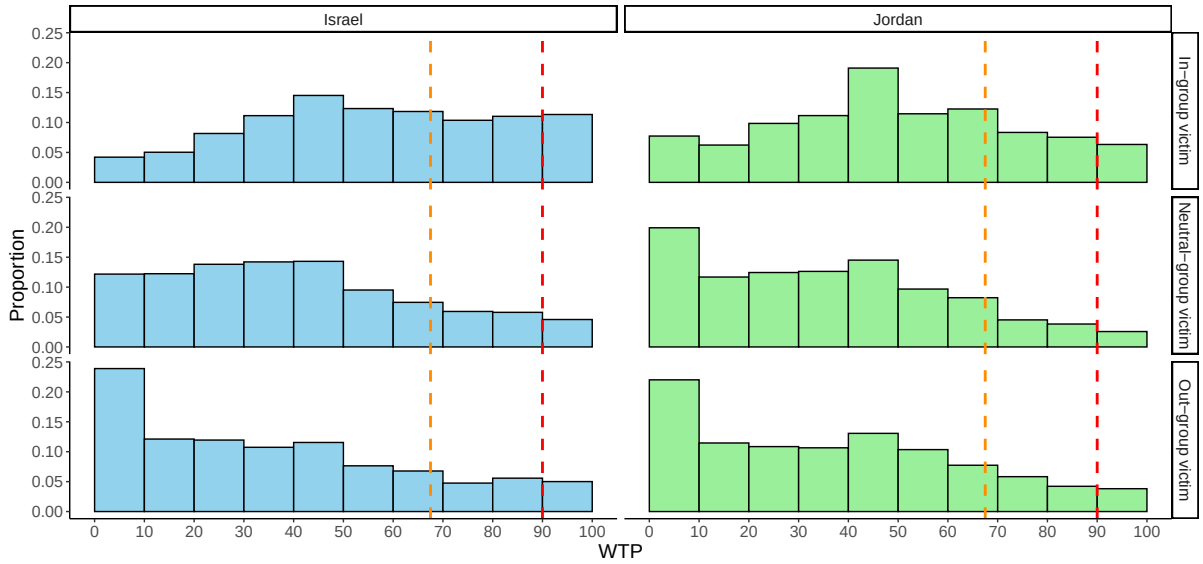
The top panel of Table 1 examines whether individuals are more likely to give up monetary rewards in order not to read about outgroup victims, compared to all other articles. We start, in columns 1-3, with the extensive margin: when are individuals unwilling to pay *anything* for reading the article? The first two columns show separate regressions for the Israeli and Jordanian samples. Participants in Israel are close to 5 percentage points (pp) more likely to completely avoid (WTP = 0) articles about outgroup victims compared to other articles. In Jordan, the gap is smaller, 2.5pp, but still significant. In column 3 we include both samples together, which allows us to control for article fixed effects. This means that the Outgroup Victim effect is identified only in comparison to ingroup articles (as Outgroup Victim does not vary within neutral articles). It also means that differences in the tendency to avoid certain articles are not due to idiosyncratic characteristics of the headline or the picture accompanying it. We find that individuals are 5pp more likely to be willing to pay nothing for articles about outgroup victims, compared to ingroup victims.

While instructive, this extensive-margin analysis is limited by the fact that in only a small share of decisions participants choose WTP=0. Columns 4-6 therefore show results using less strict WTP cutoffs, including our two theoretical benchmarks (67.5 and 90

[14]While we did not tell participants the length of each article, the average length of articles in English is 881 words, which should take participants about four minutes (as per CNN's reading time estimates). The median participant spent about 4.19 minutes reading the treatment articles. For the Israeli sample, four minutes spent on a survey are worth approximately 12 points.

[15]Appendix Figure A.1 shows the evolution of WTP by decision round (recall the order of the articles was randomized across participants). In both countries, the gap between ingroup and outgroup articles is very large throughout the experiment. In Israel the average gap slightly widens over time, whereas in Jordan there is no clear trend. All the regressions below control nonparametrically for the order of the article.

Figure 4: Distribution of WTP



Notes: The figure displays the distribution of participants' willingness to pay to read articles by their country and type of article. Neutral articles include those discussing the war in Ukraine and non-conflict disasters. Articles discussing Israeli casualties are considered ingroup for Israeli participants and outgroup for Jordanian participants. Articles discussing Palestinian casualties are considered ingroup for Jordanian participants and outgroup for Israeli participants. The red dashed indicates that participants received 90 points for answering the quiz about the article correctly. The orange dashed indicates that a risk-neutral participant who follows the odds we provided (95% odds of getting the reward if they read the article, and 20% otherwise) and is trying to maximize monetary benefits should be willing to pay any price below 67.5 points.

points). The results are pretty stark. While overall in 27% of the decisions individuals choose a WTP of less than 25 points, the likelihood of doing so is 24pp higher if the article is about outgroup victims (controlling for article fixed effects). Avoidance of outgroup articles is occurs for all thresholds.

Panel B of Table 1 examines the intensive margin by comparing how much people are willing to pay for different articles. Columns 1-3 use indicator variables for whether the article is about ingroup or outgroup victims. Columns 4-6 use continuous variables measuring how positively the article is expected to portray Israelis and Palestinians. In Israel, participants are willing to pay an average of 15.1 points more for articles about Israeli civilian victims compared to neutral articles ($p < 0.01$). Conversely, they are willing to pay 4.8 points less for articles about Palestinian civilian victims ($p < 0.01$). The total gap of approximately 20 points represents a 35-50% difference in WTP relative to the WTP for neutral articles. To put this magnitude in perspective, 20 points is equivalent to approximately seven minutes worth of survey time in our setting. Column (2) finds a similar pattern in Jordan, though with somewhat different magnitudes. Jordanian participants are on average willing to pay 13.2 points more for articles about Palestinian victims compared to neutral articles ($p < 0.01$), while showing no significant difference in WTP between Israeli victim and neutral articles. One potential explanation could be

Table 1: Willingness to Pay for Ingroup and Outgroup Articles

Panel A: Paying Not To Know

	(1) WTP=0 Israel	(2) WTP=0 Jordan	(3) WTP=0 All	(4) WTP<25 All	(5) WTP<50 All	(6) WTP<67.5 All	(7) WTP<90 All
Outgroup Victim	0.049***	0.025***	0.051***	0.238***	0.232***	0.155***	0.056***
	(0.003)	(0.008)	(0.004)	(0.013)	(0.017)	(0.011)	(0.007)
Observations	31,302	3,582	34,884	34,884	34,884	34,884	34,884
R-squared	0.469	0.431	0.467	0.511	0.580	0.605	0.667
Individual FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Article FE	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean Dep. Var.	0.0370	0.0380	0.0370	0.268	0.569	0.763	0.911

Panel B: Willingness to Pay

	(1) Israel	(2) Jordan	(3) All	(4) Israel	(5) Jordan	(6) All
Ingroup Victim	15.104***	13.175***	16.233***			
	(1.197)	(0.785)	(0.949)			
Outgroup Victim	-4.847***	0.704				
	(0.826)	(1.041)				
Ingroup Score				24.365***	25.632***	25.652***
				(1.509)	(1.865)	(4.415)
Outgroup Score				-8.178***	-10.326***	-9.898*
				(1.308)	(3.737)	(5.029)
Observations	31,302	3,582	34,884	31,302	3,582	34,884
R-squared	0.709	0.707	0.717	0.710	0.701	0.717
Individual FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Article FE	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Mean Dep. Var.	45.39	41.62	45.01	45.39	41.62	45.01
SD Dep. Var.	28.10	26.86	28	28.10	26.86	28

Notes: The dependent variable in Panel A is an indicator variable for whether the respondent's WTP is at or below the indicated threshold. The dependent variable in Panel B is the respondent's WTP, ranging from 0 to 100. Ingroup Victim and Outgroup Victim are indicator variables for the type of victims the article focuses on. Ingroup Score and Outgroup Score measure how positively or negatively the article refers to the respondent's ingroup and outgroup, measured by the proportion of respondents in the classification survey who think the article portrays the relevant group positively. All regressions control nonparametrically for the (randomized) order of the article. Standard errors clustered at the article level in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

that Jordanians are not a direct side in the conflict, and therefore, even though they identify more with Gaza, they do not consider Israelis as their outgroup to the same extent that Israelis consider Gazans as their outgroup. Again, the results are robust to controlling for article fixed effects.

We note the differences we find are probably a lower bound to the actual gap in

WTP for articles about ingroup and outgroup victims for two reasons. First, in our setting, participants complete surveys in exchange for rewards, and therefore, monetary considerations are probably more salient than typical news consumption, and still we find that many participants are willing to give up money to avoid reading about the outgroup. Second, the bunching of participants around the minimum value of zero for outgroup victim articles implying that some of these participants may have offered a lower amount if possible. In any case, the systematic differences in WTP suggests that differences in media coverage across societies may reflect underlying differences in demand.

3.2 Mechanisms

We explore four potential mechanisms that could explain the avoidance of news about outgroup victims: informational considerations, monetary incentives, universal affective motives, and social identity factors. We study these mechanisms by comparing effects across different types of articles, different types of participants, and based on participants' self-reported answers. The evidence most strongly supports social identity as the primary driver in both Israel and Jordan. We focus in this section on the Israeli survey where we have more power, where the definitions of the ingroup and outgroup are clear cut, and perhaps relatedly, there is a larger gap in WTP between ingroup victim and outgroup victim articles. We discuss the results for the Jordanian survey at the end of this section and provide more details in Appendix B.2.

Before discussing the mechanism, we describe two exhibits that this section relies on. First, Table 2 displays the WTP for articles when controlling for various article characteristics. In each column we add one characteristic to the regression and estimate the WTP for articles about ingroup and outgroup victims when controlling for that characteristic. The last column controls for all characteristics. The article characteristics are determined based on the article classification survey described in Section 2.2 and the table includes all the characteristics we asked about. Second, we show participants the articles with the highest and lowest WTP, and ask participants to explain in their own words why they were willing to pay more for one articles compared to the other. We then provide a multiple choice questions asking participants to mark all the considerations that affected their WTP. Figure 5 displays the considerations participants reported and Appendix Figure A.2 presents participants' self-reported answers and allows us to rule out additional explanations. [16]

[16]For example, one potential explanation is that participants were willing to pay more for articles about the ingroup becuase they wanted to see how the international media covers their group. Since we thought such a mechanism was unlikely to drive our results, this consideration was not included in the list of consideration participants could mark. However, we can still check whether participants mentioned the consideration in the open-ended question, which was asked before the multiple choice questions, and thus, is not affected by the list of considerations we asked about. We find that only 1% of participants in Israel and no participant in Jordan mentioned that interest in how the international media covers the conflict was a consideration in their willingness to pay.

Table 2: Willingness to Pay by Article Characteristics
Dependent variable: WTP

Panel A: Israeli Sample

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Negative Emotions	26.9***	7.9						
	(2.7)	(6.6)						
Familiar w. Incident			26.0***	10.3***				
			(2.4)	(2.4)				
Reliable Info					31.1***	8.4		
					(2.5)	(5.2)		
Important that IG Read							28.3***	18.9***
							(1.8)	(6.5)
Ingroup Victim		13.0***		9.9***		12.4***		4.2
		(2.1)		(1.5)		(2.0)		(3.6)
Outgroup Victim		-1.7		-5.6***		-2.4		-4.0***
		(3.0)		(1.0)		(1.8)		(1.0)
Observations	31,302	31,302	31,302	31,302	31,302	31,302	31,302	31,302
R-squared	0.692	0.709	0.690	0.712	0.699	0.709	0.708	0.711
Individual FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Panel B: Jordanian Sample

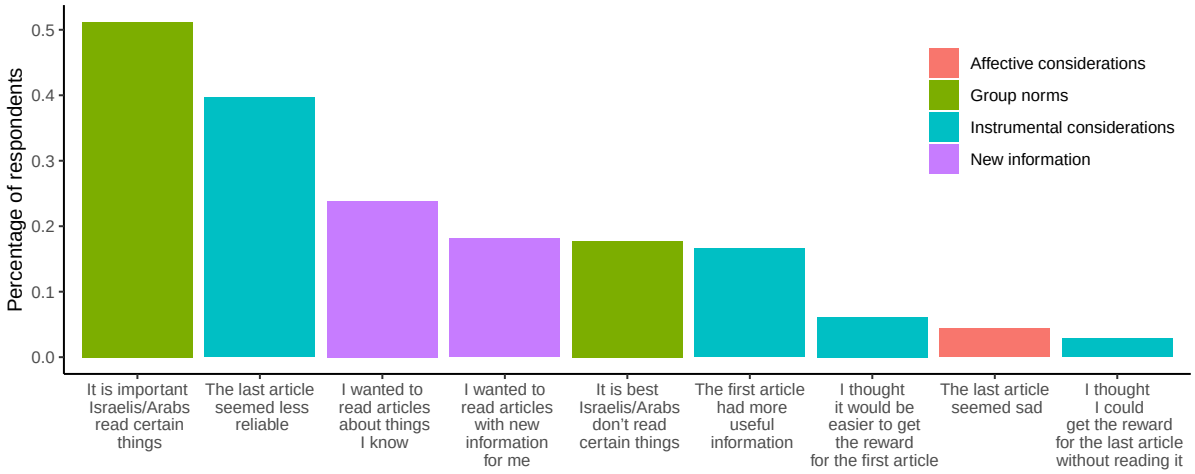
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Negative Emotions	25.1***	5.4						
	(3.8)	(4.3)						
Familiar w. Incident			24.4***	6.8*				
			(2.0)	(3.7)				
Reliable Info					28.6***	9.0**		
					(2.3)	(3.4)		
Important that IG Read							28.5***	18.4***
							(2.1)	(3.8)
Ingroup Victim		11.9***		10.0***		10.3***		5.1***
		(1.2)		(1.8)		(1.5)		(1.8)
Outgroup Victim		1.7		0.1		1.6		-2.3**
		(1.5)		(1.0)		(1.0)		(1.0)
Observations	3,582	3,582	3,582	3,582	3,582	3,582	3,582	3,582
R-squared	0.688	0.707	0.701	0.707	0.698	0.707	0.703	0.709
Individual FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Notes: The dependent variable is the respondent's WTP, ranging from 0 to 100. The main explanatory variables are article characteristics, measured by the proportion of respondents in parallel classification surveys who think: (a) the article will evoke negative emotions; (b) they are familiar with the details of the incident discussion in the article; (c) the information in the article is reliable; (d) it important that [ingroup members] read the article. The classification surveys were conducted in Israel and Jordan at the same time using separate samples from the same poulation that participated in the experiment. Ingroup Victim and Outgroup Victim indicator variables for whether the article discusses each group of victims. All regressions control nonparametrically for the (randomized) order of the article. Standard errors clustered at the article level in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

3.2.1 Informational considerations

One potential explanation for reading article about ingroup victims is that these articles contain more useful actionable information, perhaps on the dangers posed by the outgroup. Indeed, standard political economy model suggest that people choose what to read in order to use this information to make better decisions, such as deciding who to

Figure 5: WTP Rationales, Ingroup vs Outgroup Articles, Israel



Notes: The figure shows the share participants who reported each consideration for their WTP valuations. Participants were shown the article for which they were willing to pay the most and the article for which they were willing to pay the least (along with the amounts that they were willing to pay for each). They were asked to check all the relevant considerations that guided them in their choice out of a multiple option list.

vote for (Persson and Tabellini, 2002). To study whether the gap between ingroup and outgroup articles stems from the information contained in the article, we included both recent and old articles. If participants viewed some articles as providing more valuable information, we would expect the WTP gap to exist mostly for recent events. However, columns (1)-(3) of Appendix Table A.6 show that the gap in WTP persists even for articles about older events from the 2010s, where instrumental value is minimal.

We next use the article classification survey described in Section 2.2 to test whether participants provide a higher WTP for articles they are not familiar with, under the assumption that familiar articles do not contain meaningful new information. Column (2) of Table 2 shows that participants actually display a higher WTP for articles covering familiar events, contrary to what an information-value explanation would predict. Column (3) shows that article credibility is positively correlated with higher WTP (the effect is not statistically significant), but that even when controlling for credibility a large gap remains in WTP between ingroup and outgroup articles.

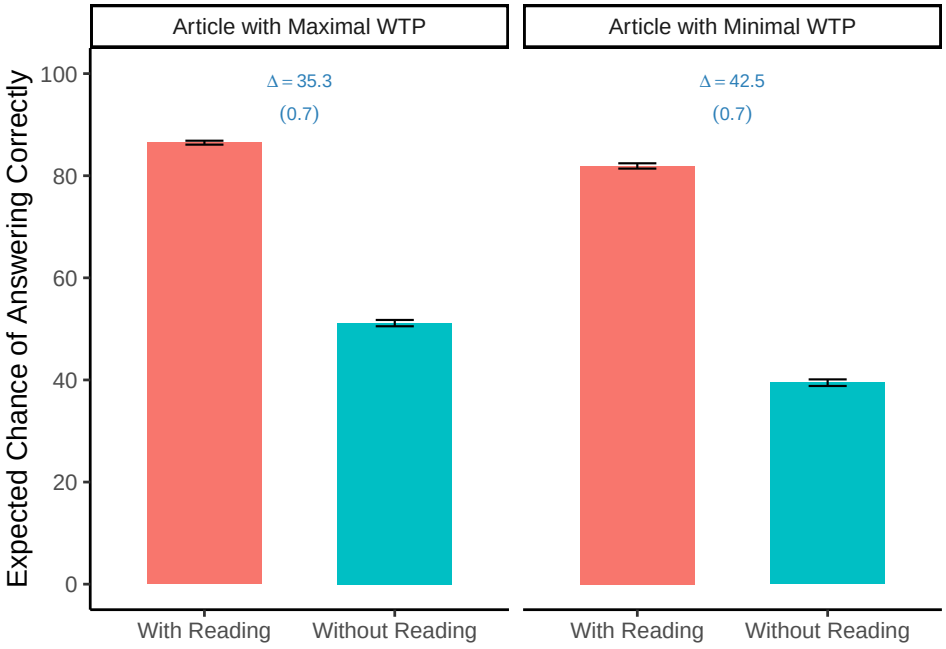
Further evidence is provided by the consideration participants report in Figure 5. While some participants mentioned wanting to read articles with new information, at least as many participants said they offered a high WTP to read about things they already know.

3.2.2 Monetary considerations

In our experiment, individuals' WTP could also be driven by an additional instrumental incentive—monetary considerations. Specifically, participants' WTP could be driven

by their expectations regarding the likelihood of receiving the reward. For example, participants may have thought that articles about ingroup victims would be easier to comprehend and that they are more likely to win the reward if they read that article. We directly assess perceived instrumental value through personalized retrospection questions asked after the WTP elicitation but before article assignment. Participants were reminded of either their lowest or highest article WTP and asked to report their perceived probability of winning the monetary prize with and without reading the article. Figure 6 shows that the difference in these probabilities (Δ) is actually smaller for articles that receive higher WTP, with $\Delta = 35.3\%$ for maximum-WTP articles versus $\Delta = 42.5\%$ for minimum-WTP articles. In other words, participants were willing to pay more for the article that they thought would increase their expected monetary payoff less. While these results sound surprising, they make sense if the main consideration was not maximizing monetary rewards. Many participants were familiar with the stories about ingroup victims, and therefore, some participants (incorrectly) assumed that they will receive the reward even without reading these articles. Offering high WTP for these articles despite these expectations suggests that monetary considerations are not driving the WTP differences between articles about ingroup and outgroup victims.

Figure 6: Expected Chances of Winning Bonus Payment With and Without Reading



Notes: The figure shows participants' average expected chances of answering the quiz about the article correctly and winning the bonus payment, with and without reading. Half of the participants were asked about the article for which they were willing to pay the most, the other half were asked about the article for which they were willing to pay the least. All participants were asked what they think are the odds that they would answer the quiz correctly if they read the article and if they do not read it. The shown difference (Δ) is the average difference between the two answers, with SE in parentheses.

Further evidence of the non-instrumental nature of evaluation is provided by the

consideration participants report in Figure 5. Fewer than 15% of participants reported that they offered a higher WTP to an ingroup articles compared to an outgroup article, becuase they thought it would be easier to get the reward for the ingroup article or because they thoughts they could get the reward for the outgroup articles without reading it.

3.2.3 Universal Affective motives

A second potential explanation is that individual avoid the negative emotions associated with outgroup articles. We leverage the classification survey and control for whether the article is expected to cause negative emotions. Column (3) of Table 2 shows that participants display a *higher* WTP for articles expected to induce negative emotions. Reading about ingroup victims make participants feel more negative, yet they still prefer reading these articles. Moreover, Figure 5 shows that fewer than 15% of participants reported offering a higher WTP for an ingroup article over an outgroup articles because the outgroup article seemed sad.

We also ask participants at the end of the survey, which emotions they felt when taking the survey. This question does not focus on any specific part of the survey, but we can use it to test whether participants who were exposed to articles about ingroup or outgroup victims had a different survey experience. Table A.5 shows that participants who were exposed to articles about the ingroup report feeling more sad during the survey. We do not find statistically significant differences across other emotions (happiness, shame, concern, anger), suggesting that emotional avoidance is not driving the preferential consumption of ingroup victim news.

3.2.4 Social identity factors

Ultimately, the strongest evidence points to social identity considerations as the key mechanism. First, Table 3 shows that the gap in WTP is significantly larger among participants who report high levels of pride in their ingroup.[17] The heterogeneity is substantial—the difference in WTP for article about ingroup and outgroup victims when adding article fixed effect is 44% larger for participants who very strongly identify with their group, compared to participants who do not.

Second, column (7) of Table 2 shows that controlling for whether participants think that it is important that people from their group will read an article ("group norms") explains a substantial portion of both the positive effect for ingroup victims and the negative effect for outgroup victims on WTP. In contrast to the perceived familiarity of the article's topic, its reliability, or the emotions it is expected to evoke, controlling for groups norms closes almost all of the gap between the WTP for ingroup and outgroup

[17] We define identity based on nationality and ask Israelis how proud they are to be Israeli and ask Jordanian how proud they are of the Palestinian people. The results hold when replacing the national identity with the religious or ethnic identity and asking Israelis how proud they are to be Jews and asking Jordanian how proud they are to be Arabs (Table A.3).

Table 3: Difference in WTP by Ingroup Pride

	Israel	Jordan	Both
IG victim	12.634***	8.153***	12.143***
	(1.148)	(1.421)	(0.860)
OG victim	-2.596***	3.073**	
	(0.819)	(1.359)	
IG victim * Very proud	4.180***	6.239***	5.849***
	(0.550)	(1.661)	(0.606)
OG victim * Very proud	-3.763***	-2.991*	
	(0.417)	(1.680)	
Individual FE	X	X	X
Article FE			X
Reference Group Mean	42.53	37.77	
Num.Obs.	31554	3582	35136
R2	0.711	0.708	0.718

Notes: This table shows the relationship between ingroup pride and willingness to pay for articles. The dependent variable in all columns is the respondent's WTP, ranging from 0 to 100. Ingroup Victim and Outgroup Victim are indicator variables for the type of victims the article focuses on. Very Proud indicates whether the participant said they were very proud to be Israeli (for Israeli participants) or of the Palestinian people (for Jordanian participants). All regressions control non-parametrically for the randomized order of the article. Standard errors clustered at the article level in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

articles.

Finally, Figure 5 shows that when participants were asked directly about their rationales for their WTP values, the most common explanation, marked by over 40% of participants is about injunctive group considerations ("it is important that Israeli read certain things"). Furthermore, when we classified participants answers to open-ended questions explaining their considerations, attitudes toward the outgroup were also an important driver with 46% participants saying that they prefer to read about their group and an additional 25% expressing lack of interest or hate for the other group (Appendix Figure A.2).

Mechanisms in Jordan Appendix B.2 discusses the mechanisms explaining the gap in WTP for ingroup victim and outgroup victim articles in Jordan. Overall, we find mostly similar qualitative results. Based on the explanations participants provided, Jordanians did not offer different WTP due to monetary considerations. Furthermore, based on the classification of articles, participants did not offer a higher WTP for articles that evoked less negative emotions or for articles they are less familiar with. Social identity seems to be a key mechanism in Jordan as the WTP gap is higher for participants with a stronger identification with their group, participants offer a higher WTP for articles perceived as important for their group, and a plurality of participants mention injunctive

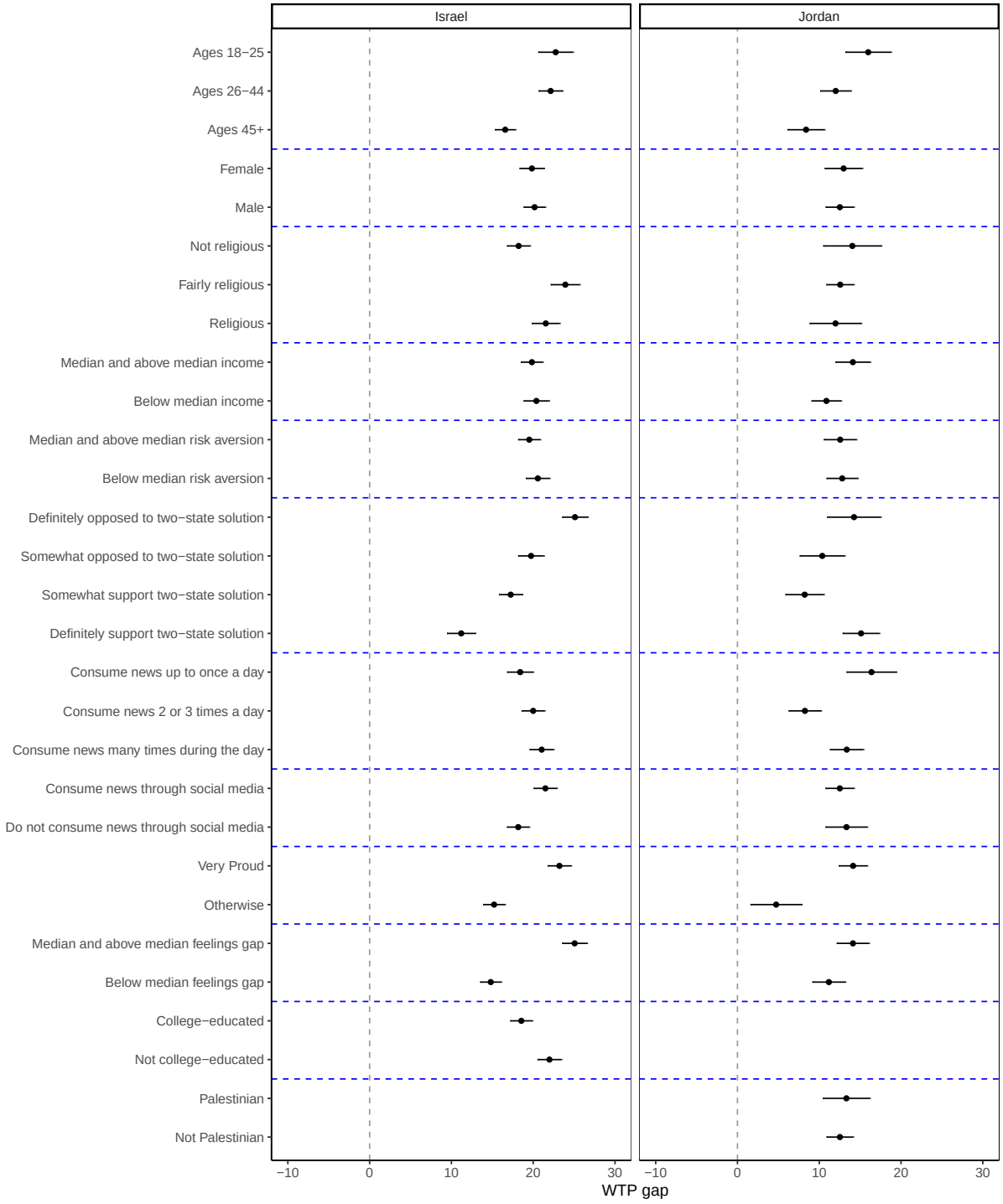
group considerations. The main difference between the samples is that for Jordanians the reliability of articles also seems to be an important mechanism, with many participants mentioning reliability as a consideration for offering lower WTP for outgroup victim articles.

3.3 Heterogeneity and Robustness

Figure 7 shows that the gap between the WTP for article about ingroup victims and articles about outgroup victim news is remarkably robust across various subgroups and specifications. We find similar patterns across age groups, among men and women, across income groups, and among both religious and not religious participants. The WTP gap is larger among Israelis who oppose a two-state solution (a more Hawkish position), those with more negative attitude toward the outgroup and as previously mentioned, participants who are more proud of the ingroup. However, even among the demographics with the smaller gap, we still find a substantially higher willingness to pay for ingroup articles.

These results suggest that selective exposure to victim narratives during conflict is not driven by a small subset of extreme individuals, but rather reflects broader patterns of identity-motivated information consumption. The systematic nature of these choices may help explain why different sides of a conflict often maintain very different understandings of events, even when factual information is technically available to all parties.

Figure 7: Ingroup-Outgroup gaps in WTP across subgroups



Notes: The figure shows the difference between the average WTP of ingroup victims articles and outgroup victims articles by various demographic divisions. The panel on the left refer to Israeli participants and the panels on the right refers Jordanian participants. Income is reported at the household level with regard to each participant's national median. Risk aversion is asked as per Falk et al. (2018), through a 0-10 point scale on the question "how willing or unwilling you are to take risks". The feelings gap refers to participants' answers on a feelings thermometer question which asked them to state their feeling towards Palestinians and Israelis on a scale of 0-100. We then calculate the gap between the ingroup and outgroup thermometer score. The relevant median in both risk aversion and the feelings gap refers to the full sample median. Very Proud refers to whether the participant indicated they were very proud to be Israeli or very proud of the Palestinian people. For Jordanian participants, all answers were collected during the survey. For Israeli participants, age, gender, religiosity, income, and education were provided through the panel provider.

4 The Effect of Reading about the Outgroup

Does it matter that individuals prefer reading about ingroup victims? In this section we test whether reading these articles affects participants. We first study whether participants understood and remembered the content of the articles, then analyze the effect on knowledge, empathy, and policy positions, and finally study heterogeneity.

4.1 Article Comprehension

We begin by examining whether our experimental manipulation successfully affected article comprehension, as measured by performance on the quiz questions. This analysis has three purposes. First, it serves as a manipulation check and tests whether at least some participants read the article. Second, it allows us to test whether participants read, understand, or remember, ingroup and outgroup articles differently. Third, in the next section we use the comprehension questions as a first stage for estimating the local average treatment effect of reading the article.

We find that being assigned a price of zero (i.e., being exposed to the article) substantially increases comprehension, compared to being assigned the maximum price of 100 (i.e., almost no exposure). Table 4 show that the average probability of answering a comprehension question correctly increased by 54 percentage points in Israel and 35 percentage points in Jordan when participants were assigned a zero price, compared to those assigned the maximum price.[18] These results confirm that our price manipulation effectively influenced article reading and comprehension.

We next test whether comprehension increased more for ingroup victim articles. Columns (4)-(6) of Table 4 show that the increase in comprehension is higher for the ingroup, but not dramatically so. The increased comprehension after being exposed to both ingroup and outgroup articles means that people read and understand content that they prefer to avoid when they have an incentive to do so. Indeed, Appendix Figure A.3 shows the time spent reading the articles. The distribution of time spent is remarkably very similar for ingroup and outgroup articles in Israel and in Jordan.

While we do not find dramatic differences in the time spent reading the article, or its comprehension, participants may still suffer from motivated memory (Amelio and Zimmermann, 2023), and remember better the article that portrays their group more favorably. In Appendix Table A.4, we find no evidence for biased memory, at least in the short run. Participants correctly answer the quiz questions for both ingroup and outgroup articles in a follow-up survey at similar rates (they answer 76% of the questions correctly compared to 82% in the baseline survey) and their performance is almost identical for ingroup and outgroup articles.

[18] Note that these are not the increases in the odds of winning the bonus prize since participants were only required to answer two out of three questions correctly to win the bonus.

Table 4: Comprehension

	Dependent variable: share of correct answers					
	Israel	Jordan	Both	Israel	Jordan	Both
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Zero Price	0.538***	0.353***	0.523***	0.543***	0.306***	0.521***
	(0.027)	(0.069)	(0.025)	(0.028)	(0.085)	(0.026)
IG Article*Zero Price	0.1***	0.07	0.094***	0.097***	0.133	0.095***
	(0.035)	(0.105)	(0.033)	(0.036)	(0.119)	(0.034)
IG Victim Article	-0.086***	0.03	-0.072**	-0.085***	-0.009	-0.074**
	(0.031)	(0.083)	(0.029)	(0.032)	(0.097)	(0.03)
Individual Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Reference Group Mean	0.288	0.208	0.277	0.288	0.208	0.277
Observations	1403	159	1562	1403	159	1562
R^2	0.468	0.238	0.433	0.493	0.442	0.471

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Note: The table presents estimated the effect of exposure to an article on the share of correct quiz answers. Zero Price is an indicator to whether the article was assigned a price of zero, which guarantees exposure to the article. IG Article or IG Victim Article is an indicator to whether the individual was matched with the article which focused on victims from their ingroup. The sample excludes participants who were assigned to the neutral article.. Standard errors are robust. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

4.2 Effects on Knowledge, Empathy, and Policy Support

We next examine our primary outcomes: knowledge regarding basic facts about the conflict, willingness to consider civilian casualties in military operations, and empathy toward outgroup civilians. In this section, we focus on the Israeli participants since we are underpowered to detect effects among our small sample of participants in Jordan.

Figure 8 reveals that reading articles had a strong effect on most of our outcomes. The figure displays the raw values for our primary outcomes variables, along with the donation outcome, for participants who were exposed to an article about the ingroup, participants who were exposed to an article about the outgroup, and all other participants. As we pre-specified, we pool in the control group participants who received a price of 100 (were likely not exposed to an article) and participants who were exposed to the neutral articles (about Chinese victims) because their outcomes are similar. The figures show that for almost all the outcomes there is a statistically significant effect for reading about outgroup articles, compared to ingroup articles. In Figure 9 we present the effect of ingroup articles compared to outgroup articles in a regression framework where we also include our pre-specified control variable and thus, have slightly more power. Appendix Table A.7 present the full regression results. The rest of this section discusses the effects we find.

First, we study the effect on beliefs regarding two objective facts related to outgroup victims. We find that reading the article about Gazan victims increased the shares of Israelis who correctly agree that thousands of Gazan children died in Israeli strikes from 25-29%% to 36%. The treatment did not affect agreement with the fact that most of the victims in Gaza are civilians. It is possible that agreement with the first statement was

affected because the number of children who died in the conflict was mentioned in the middle of the article. On the other hand, while it may have been possible to deduce that a large share of those killed were civilians, this fact was not mentioned explicitly.[19] This results suggests that individuals can learn new facts when exposed to news about the outgroup, even when those facts are not highlighted and portray their group negatively, but at the same time, individuals may avoid updating their priors toward beliefs that are negative toward their ingroup when the facts are not explicitly mentioned.

Second, the share of participants expressing empathy toward the outgroup increases from 28%-33% to 38% ($p < 0.01$). To study whether the articles affected behavior and not only self-reported answers, we analyze donations. The fourth column of Table A.7 finds a statistically significant effect on this outcome. The probability of donating money to a charity that helps the outgroup increases from 4% for participants exposed to the ingroup article, to 6% for participants exposed to the outgroup article.

Third, reading about outgroup victims affects policy opinions as it increases support for the consideration of outgroup civilian casualties in military operations. The share supporting this opinion is 24% in the control group, 21% for participants exposed to the ingroup article, and it increases to 27% for participants exposed to the outgroup articles. This effect is meaningful since public opinion can determine not only whether a country goes to war or ends a war, but also how the war is conducted. Armies constantly make decision on what is an acceptable number of civilian casualties and they are more likely to try to prevent civilian deaths when public pressure (within or outside the military) argues that the suffering of the outgroup should be taken into account.

Fourth, we find an effect on our OG Attitude Index, which is the sum of the answers favorable to the outgroup among our primary outcomes (two factual perceptions questions, considering the outgroup suffering and expressing empathy toward the outgroup). We find that the index increased by about 0.25 points. In other words, on average, one of every four participants exposed to the outgroup article had one more favorable answer than participants exposed to the ingroup article. However, even among participants exposed to outgroup articles, the average participant only expressed 1.15 answers favorable to the outgroup, demonstrating the prevalent negative attitudes during wartime.

4.2.1 Effect of reading and understanding the article

The effects we presented so far are the ITT effects of article assignment, however not all individuals assigned to an article necessarily read it carefully. Moreover, a very small share of readers who were willing to pay the maximum were exposed to the article even though they were assigned a price of 100 points. To estimate the effect of reading and understanding the article's content, we use an instrumental variable approach, where

[19] The article mentions that "More than 14,800 Palestinians, including 6,000 children, have been killed in Gaza."

our independent variable is fully comprehending the article as proxied by answer all comprehension questions correctly and our independent variable is treatment assignment. We present the local average treatment effect (LATE) of reading and understanding the article in Figure 9 and Appendix Table A.8, and find effects that are roughly 50% larger than our ITT estimates. For example, thoroughly reading an outgroup article compared to an ingroup article increases stated empathy by about 17 percentage points, donation by 7 percentage points, and the share of participants who support considering the suffering of the outgroup by 10 percentage points. We note that this approach requires a strong exclusion restriction assumption that the entire effect of the articles on policy preferences, empathy, and knowledge is driven through reading the article sufficiently to answer the comprehension questions, and therefore, should be interpreted more carefully.

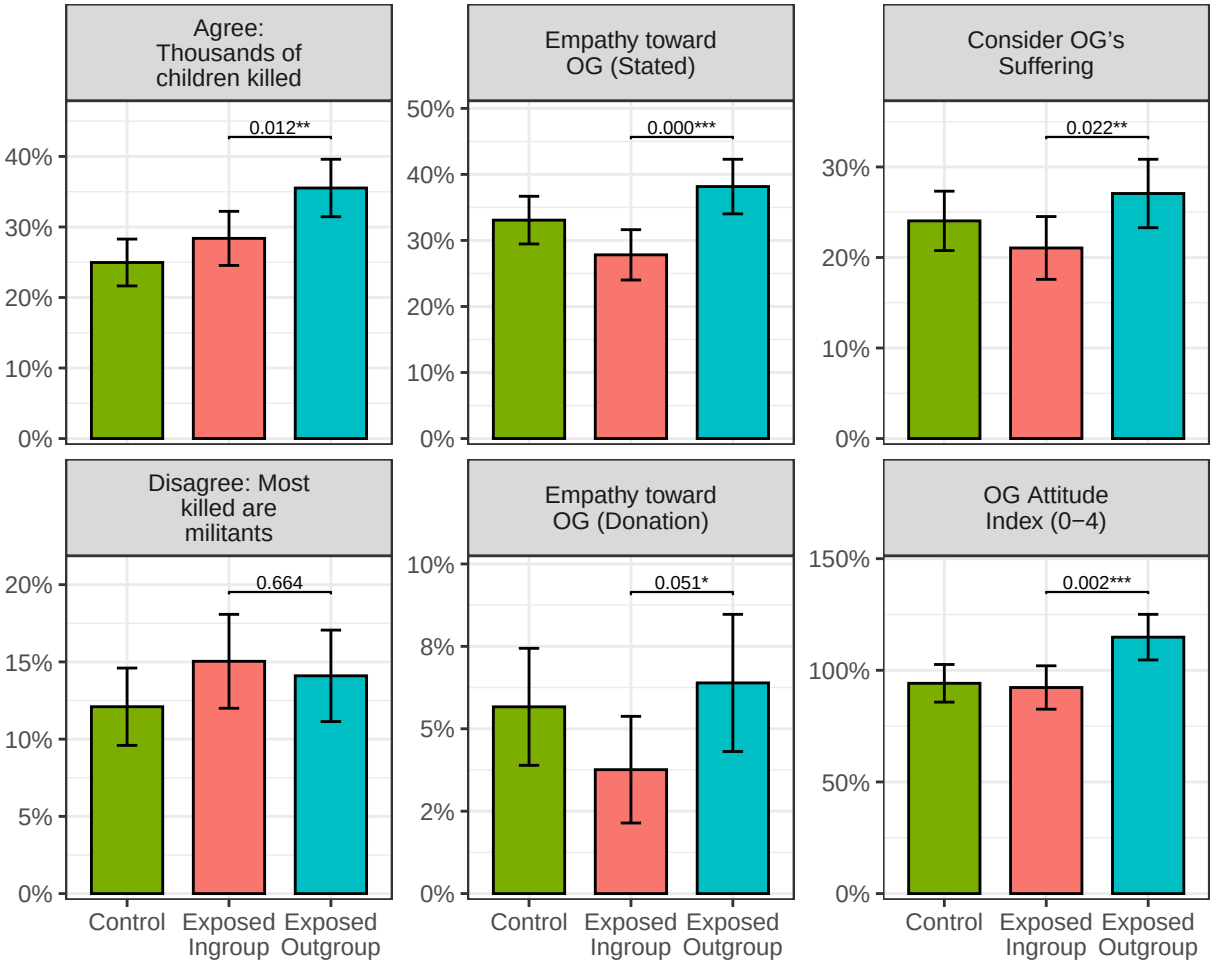
It is perhaps surprising that one article can have such large effects. One potential explanation for the magnitudes is that individuals are rarely exposed to articles about outgroup victims. As we discussed in Section 1, mainstream news channels mostly cover ingroup victims. Even when the outgroup victims are covered, they are almost always covered through the narrative of the ingroup, in contrast to the CNN articles participants were exposed to.

4.2.2 Persistence

Figure 9 and Appendix Table A.9 show that the effects on empathy and considering civilian casualties in military operations persist in a follow-up survey conducted 1-7 days after the main experiment. The impact on stated empathy toward outgroup civilians persists, with exposure to outgroup articles increasing empathy by 7 percentage point, compared to ingroup articles ($p < 0.05$). Similarly, the effect on considering outgroup civilian casualties persists, with a 15 percentage point difference between exposure to ingroup and outgroup articles ($p < 0.01$). The effect of the outgroup article on agreeing with the statement that thousands of Gazan children died still moves in the expected direction but decreases by about half and, as a result, this effects is no longer statistically significant compared to the ingroup, but is still significant compared to the control group. Finally, the effect on the OG Attitude Index is almost identical compared to the baseline survey.

This persistence is notable given that participants were exposed to just a single article in a controlled setting. It suggests that systematic differences in news consumption patterns could have lasting effects on attitudes and beliefs in conflict settings.

Figure 8: Outcomes by Treatment



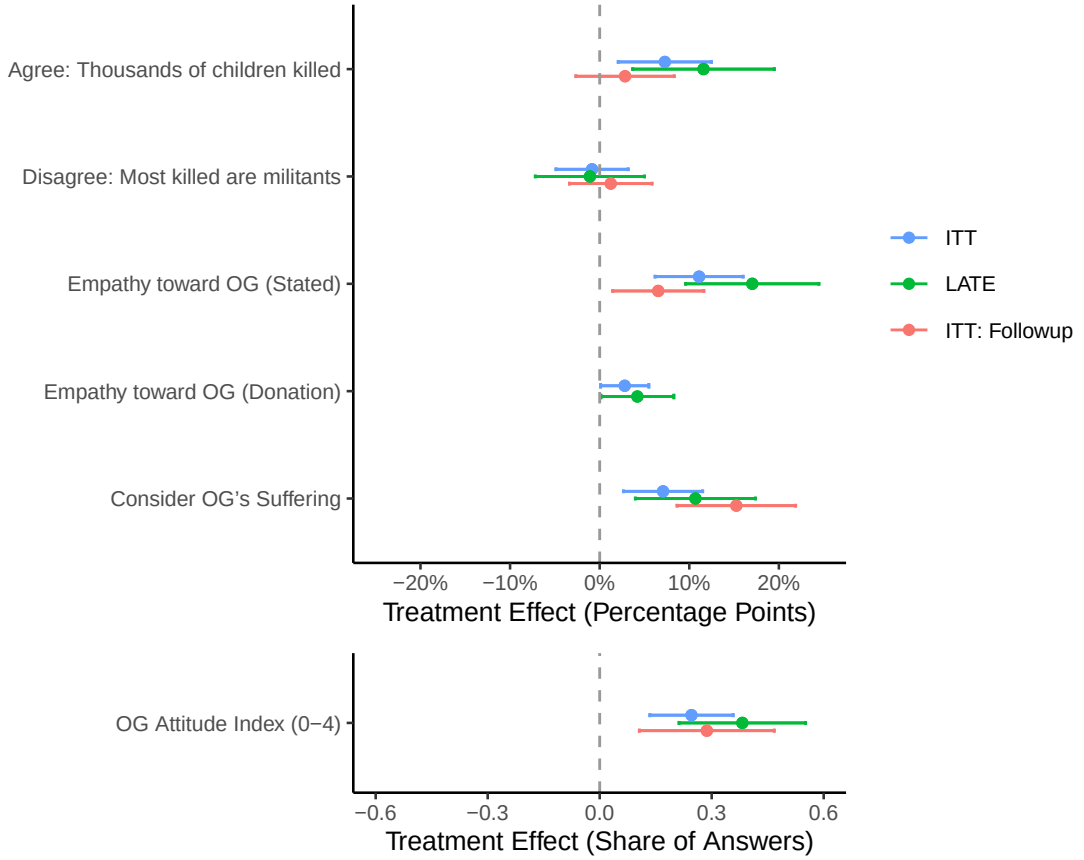
This figure present six main outcomes by treatment arms for the Israeli sample. The figure present raw values along with the p-value of a comparison between Exposed Ingroup and Exposed Outgroup (without any controls). *Exposed Ingroup* and *Exposed Outgroup* refer to participants who were assigned a zero price for the ingroup and outgroup article, respectively. The control group includes both participants who were assigned a price of 100 and were typically not exposed to any article and participants exposed to a neutral articles. The outcomes are defined in Section 2.1.4.

5 Does the effect of news depend on whether people want to hear it?

A key question is whether the effects of news exposure vary with participants' ex-ante willingness to read such news. This speaks to whether selective exposure matters: if those who choose to avoid news about outgroup victim would not be affected by it anyway, even if they encountered it, then news avoidance might be less consequential. Our unique design allows us to answer that question by analyzing heterogeneity based on participants' WTP.

Figure 10 presents our main outcomes separately based on participants' WTP and

Figure 9: Outcomes by Treatment



This figure present coefficients from regression estimating the effect six main outcomes by treatment arms. The figure present the coefficient from a regression estimating the difference between being assigned a zero price for the ingroup and outgroup article, respectively (control group participants are also in the regression but are not shown in the figure). ITT is the effect estimated using an intention-to-treat regression from our baseline survey. LATE estimates the effect of reading and understanding an article. Reading and understanding is proxied by answering all the comprehension questions correctly. In this regression answering questions about the ingroup correct is instrumented with being assigned the ingroup article with a zero price and answering questions about the outgroup correct is instrumented with being assigned the outgroup articles with a zero price. Persistence measures the intention to treat effect in our follow-up survey. The follow-up survey did not include the donation questions. The outcomes are defined in Section 2.1.4.

shows that the article had an effect even on people who were less willing to read it. We compute the difference in the WTP for the treatment articles focusing on outgroup and ingroup victims and split the sample at the median. There are clear differences across participants above and below the median. For example, participants with lower WTP for an article about outgroup victims (relative to ingroup) are much less likely to express empathy toward the outgroup or support taking into account the outgroup suffering. Despite these differences, we find that exposure to the outgroup article significantly increased empathy and support for taking into account outgroup suffering among partic-

ipants with lower WTP. The effects are not smaller (and may even be larger) compared to participants with higher WTP.

It is possible that the WTP for two specific articles is a noisy measure of news avoidance. In Appendix Figure A.4, we split participants based on their average WTP for all ingroup and outgroup articles ($\bar{WTP}_{OG} - \bar{WTP}_{IG}$), instead of just the treated articles. The results are similar—we find an effect among participants with below-median WTP for articles about outgroup victims.

Appendix Tables A.10-A.11 test our hypothesis further. We leverage the range of differences in WTP (instead of splitting the sample in two) in a regression framework and show that there is no significant interaction between the ingroup-outgroup WTP gap and the effect of the outgroup article

These findings suggest that selective exposure to different victim narratives likely plays a meaningful role in sustaining gaps in knowledge, attitudes, and policy preferences across conflict parties. Finding an effect of exposure even among those who would choose to avoid such information implies that systematic differences in news consumption may contribute to persistent disagreements about basic facts and appropriate policies.

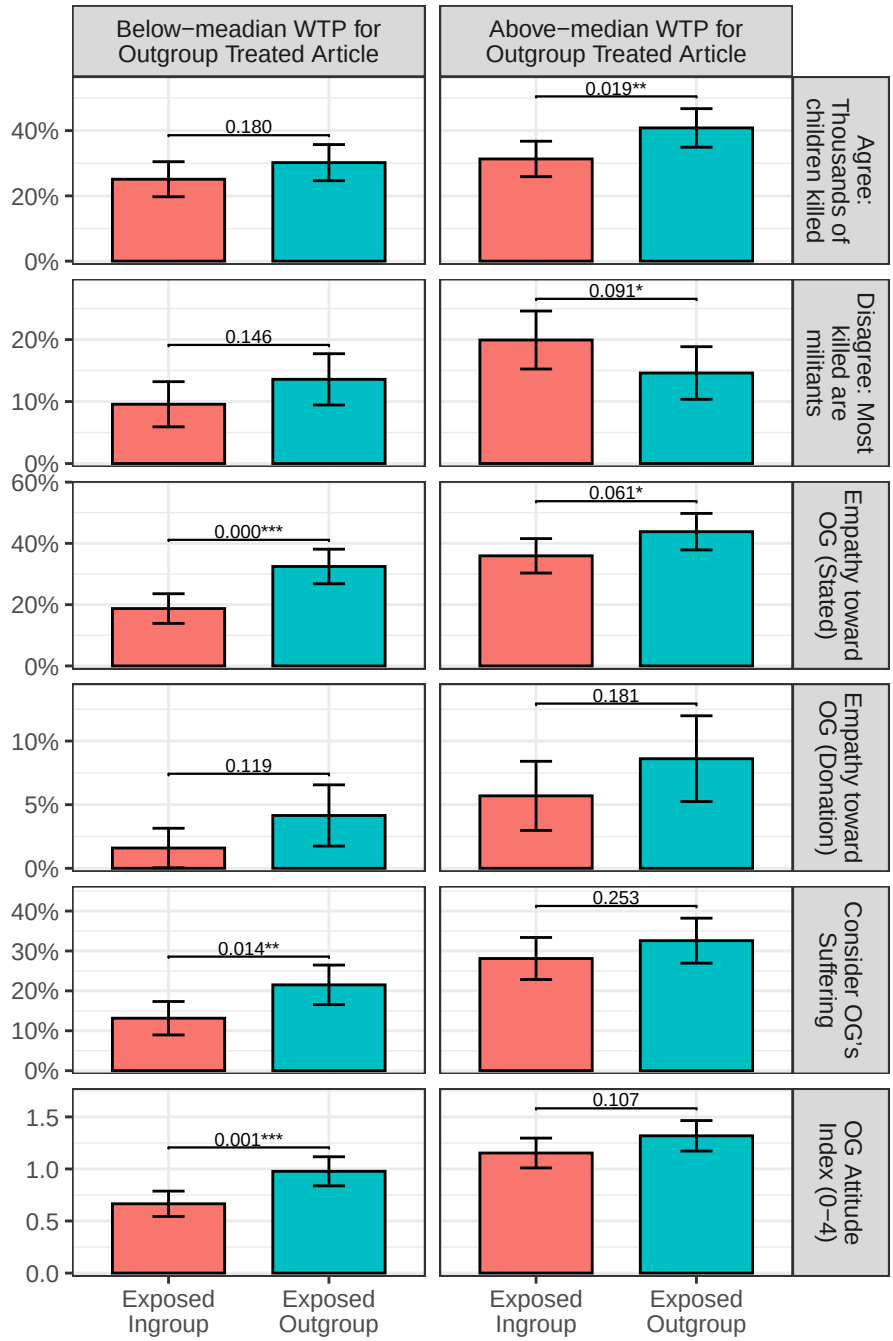
6 Conclusions

This paper provides experimental evidence on how social identity shapes news consumption during conflict and how exposure to news about different victims affects knowledge and attitudes. Using incentivized experiments in Israel and Jordan, we document systematic avoidance of news about outgroup civilian casualties, even when such avoidance carries direct monetary costs. The gap in willingness to pay between articles about ingroup and outgroup civilian victims is substantial and several pieces of evidence point to social identity as the key mechanism driving these patterns.

The consequences of selective exposure appear meaningful. When randomly assigned to read about outgroup civilian casualties, participants display increased empathy toward the outgroup, greater willingness to consider civilian casualties in military operations, and are more likely to hold correct beliefs regarding basic facts of the conflict. These effects persist for at least several days and are not smaller among participants who would typically avoid such news. This suggests that systematic differences in news consumption may help sustain gaps in knowledge and attitudes across conflict parties.

Our findings have several implications. First, they suggest that divergent media coverage during conflict may reflect demand-side factors as much as supply-side editorial decisions. Second, they highlight social identity as an important driver of information acquisition choices, extending previous work on identity in economics to the domain of news consumption. Third, they suggest that exposure to news about outgroup suffering can affect attitudes and beliefs even among those predisposed to avoid such information.

Figure 10: Heterogeneity by WTP Gap between Ingroup and Outgroup Treatment Articles



This figure presents six main outcomes by treatment arms for the Israeli sample, for two subgroups based on their WTP. We calculate for each participant the difference between the WTP for treatment article about outgroup victims and the WTP for the treatment article about ingroup victims, take the average across participants, and divide participants into two groups, those below the median, who are willing to pay less for outgroup articles compared to ingroup articles, and those above median, who are willing to pay more for outgroup articles. The figure present raw values along with the p-value of a comparison between Exposed Ingroup and Exposed Outgroup (without any control variables). *Exposed Ingroup* and *Exposed Outgroup* refer to participants who were assigned a zero price for the ingroup and outgroup article, respectively. The outcomes are defined in Section 2.1.4.

These results point to both challenges and opportunities for reducing conflict-related polarization. While social identity considerations create systematic biases in information consumption, our finding that exposure affects even those who would avoid such news suggests potential benefits from policies that increase exposure to diverse conflict narratives. Future work might explore how such exposure could be increased while accounting for identity-related preferences.

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Persson, T. and G. Tabellini (2002). *Political economics: explaining economic policy*. MIT press.

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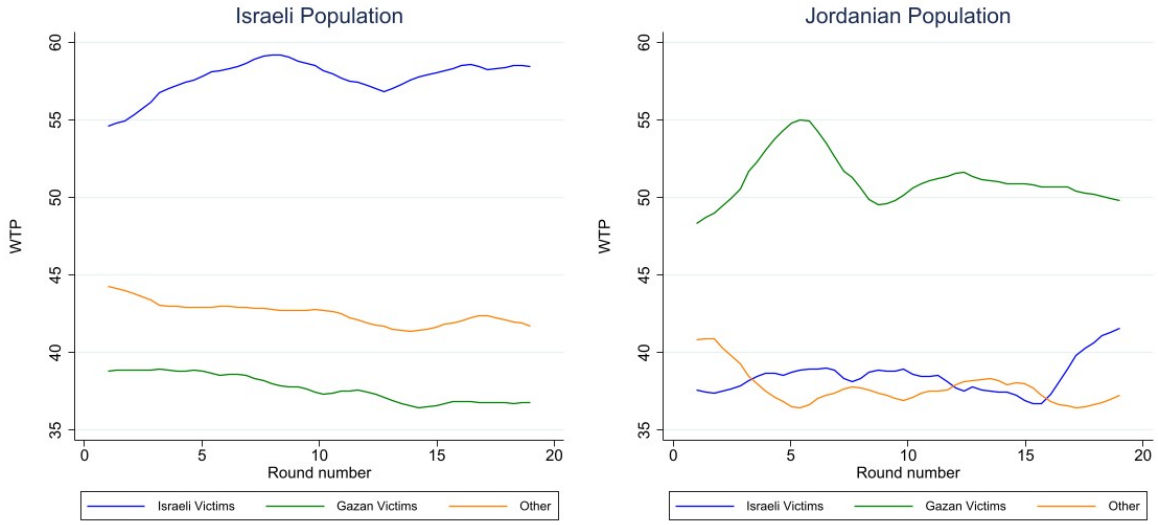
Shayo, M. (2009). “A model of social identity with an application to political economy: Nation, class, and redistribution”. In: *American Political science review* 103.2, pp. 147–174.

Wagner, R. H. (2000). “Bargaining and war”. In: *American Journal of Political Science*, pp. 469–484.

Online Appendix

A Additional Tables and Figures

Figure A.1: WTP Over Rounds, by Victim Type and Population



Local Polynomial Smoothing (Bandwidth = 1).

Table A.1: Composition of Articles Participants were Asked About

CNN Headline	2010s	2023
Palestinian victims	2/5	2/7
Israeli victims	2/6	2/7
Ukrainian victims	2/4	3/5
Other disasters	1/3	1/3
Treatment articles	0	3
Attention check	1	

Table A.2: Randomization probabilities

Article Type	Israeli Victims	Gazan Victims	Chinese Victims
Minimum Price (0)	30%	30%	18%
Maximum Price (100)	10%	10%	0%
Uniformly random price	2% (dropped from analysis)		

Table A.3: Difference in WTP by Ingroup Pride

	Israel	Jordan	Both
IG victim	11.275***	10.618***	11.719***
	(1.294)	(1.079)	(0.937)
OG victim	-2.727***	0.238	
	(0.720)	(1.132)	
IG victim * Very proud	5.671***	3.665**	6.565***
	(0.641)	(1.409)	(0.604)
OG victim * Very proud	-3.108***	0.609	
	(0.479)	(1.511)	
Individual FE	X	X	X
Article FE			X
Reference Group Mean	42.53	37.77	
Num.Obs.	31554	3582	35136
R2	0.711	0.706	0.719

Figure A.2: Consideration for WTP between Ingroup and Outgroup Article based on an Open-Ended Question, Israel

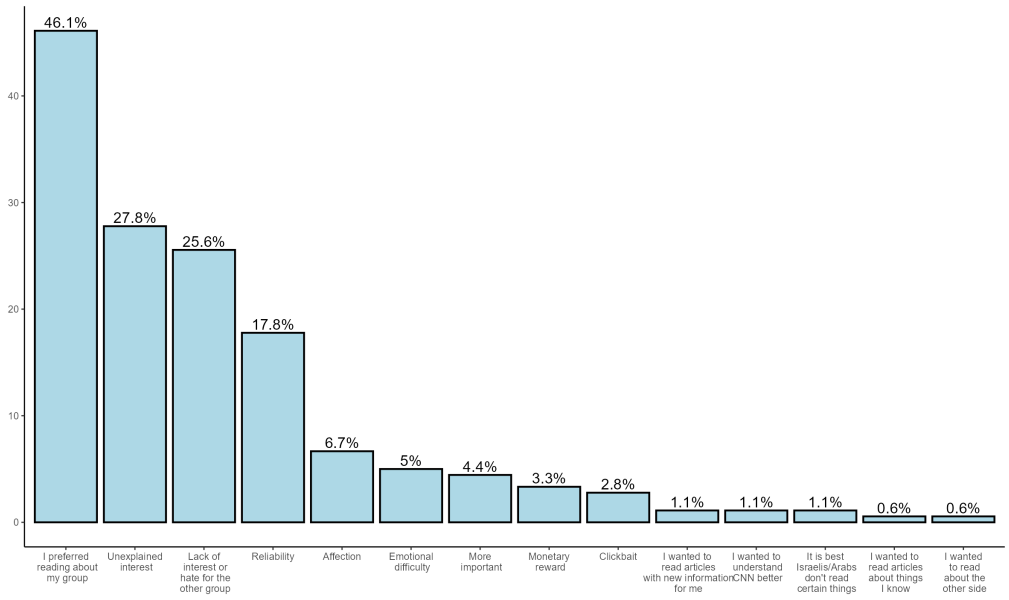


Table A.4: Recollection

	Dependent variable: share of correct answers					
	Israel	Jordan	Both	Israel	Jordan	Both
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Zero Price	0.476***	0.348***	0.469***	0.493***	0.473***	0.488***
	(0.026)	(0.115)	(0.026)	(0.026)	(0.151)	(0.026)
IG Article*Zero Price	0.003	-0.178	-0.004	-0.015	-0.404*	-0.027
	(0.038)	(0.163)	(0.038)	(0.039)	(0.229)	(0.038)
IG Victim Article	0.022	0.194	0.029	0.036	0.408**	0.046
	(0.035)	(0.144)	(0.034)	(0.035)	(0.184)	(0.035)
Individual Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Reference Group Mean	0.293	0.355	0.297	0.293	0.355	0.297
Observations	1177	62	1239	1177	62	1239
R^2	0.391	0.194	0.378	0.437	0.521	0.425

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

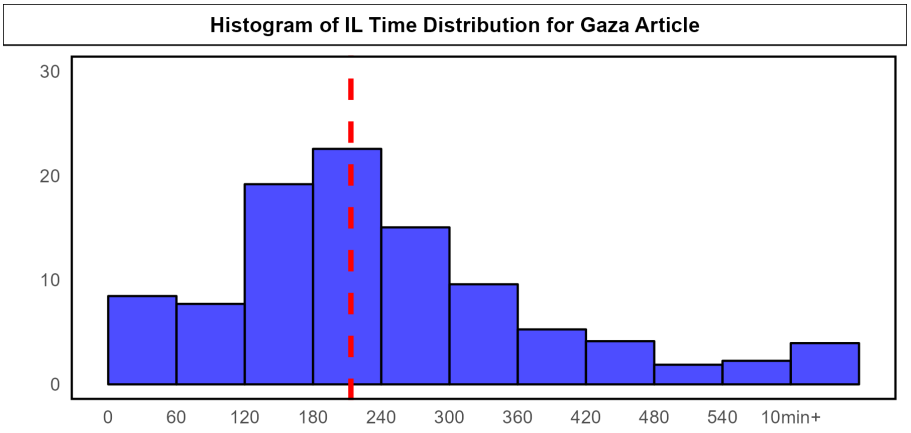
Table A.5: End of Survey Emotions

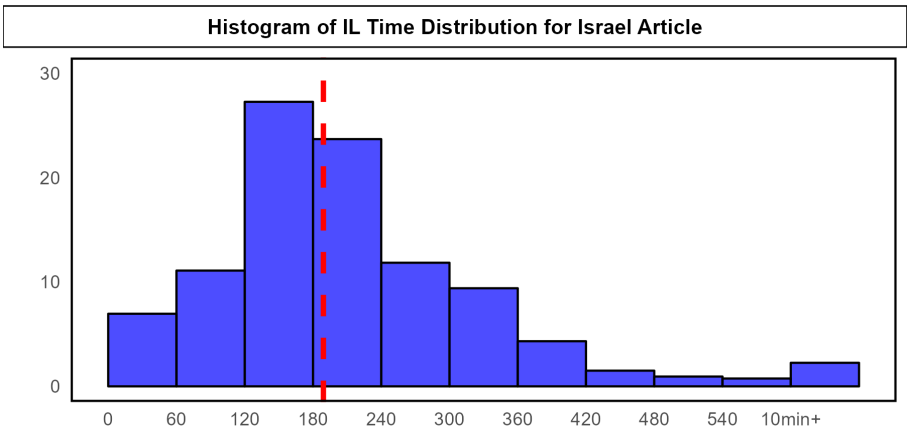
	Did you feel...					Overall enjoyment
	Happy	Sad	Ashamed	Concerned	Angry	(1-5 scale)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
IG Victim	-0.014	0.126***	0.013	-0.028	0.057**	0.035
	(0.012)	(0.028)	(0.013)	(0.022)	(0.028)	(0.048)
OG Victim	-0.028***	0.062**	0.023*	-0.039*	0.101***	-0.123**
	(0.011)	(0.028)	(0.014)	(0.022)	(0.028)	(0.05)
OG - IG	-0.013	-0.064**	0.01	-0.011	0.044	-0.158***
(P-value)	(0.214)	(0.027)	(0.495)	(0.62)	(0.147)	(0.002)
Individual Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Reference Group Mean	0.051	0.562	0.044	0.184	0.342	3.325
Observations	1717	1717	1717	1717	1717	1717
R^2	0.048	0.073	0.052	0.027	0.086	0.094

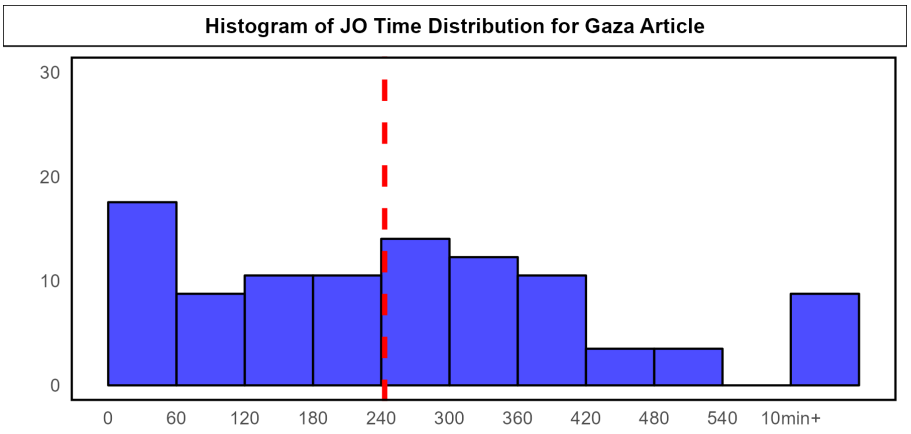
*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

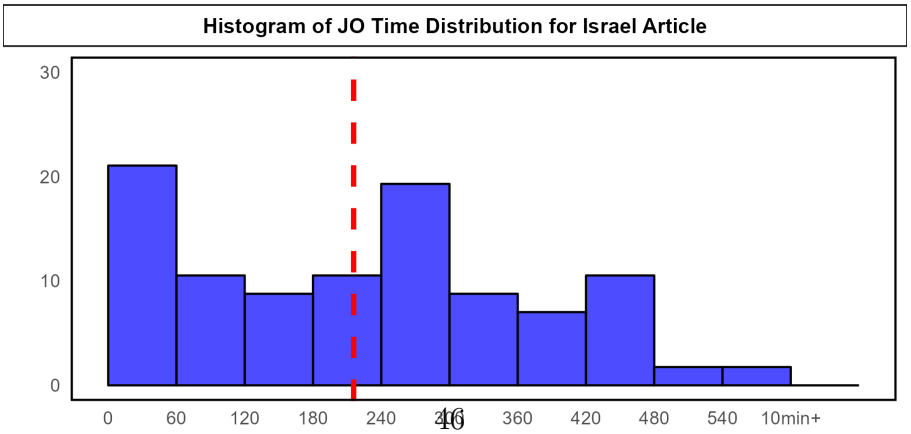
Figure A.3: Time spent reading the articles

(a) Israel









(b) Jordan

Table A.6: WTP for New and Old Articles

	2010 Israel	2010 Jordan	2010 Both	2023 Israel	2023 Jordan	2023 Both
IG victim	11.764***	12.660***	13.738***	17.411***	13.534***	17.908***
	(1.176)	(1.391)	(1.094)	(0.883)	(0.851)	(0.703)
OG victim	-5.777***	2.909*		-4.156***	-0.823	
	(1.155)	(1.396)		(0.940)	(0.979)	
Individual FE	X	X	X	X	X	X
Article FE			X			X
Reference Group Mean	41.77	37.63		42.99	37.86	
Num.Obs.	12271	1393	13664	19283	2189	21472
R2	0.745	0.726	0.748	0.712	0.713	0.716

Table A.7: ITT Effects on Knowledge, Attitudes, and Empathy

	Agree: Thousands of children killed	Disagree: Most killed are militants	Empathy towards OG (Stated)	Empathy toward
IG Zero Price	0.037	0.032*	-0.037	-0.
	(0.025)	(0.019)	(0.023)	(0.
OG Zero Price	0.109***	0.024	0.074***	0.
	(0.026)	(0.020)	(0.025)	(0.
OG - IG	0.073***	-0.008	0.111***	0.0
(P-value)	(0.008)	(0.690)	(0.000)	(0.
Reference group mean	0.250	0.121	0.331	0.
Individual controls	X	X	X	
N	1717	1717	1717	1

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

The sample includes only participants from Israel who were assigned a reading price of either 0 or 100 points. Standard errors are robust. The table presents estimated coefficients on the effect of assigned articles and prices. IG Zero Price indicates the individual was assigned to read about ingroup victims and the price of reading was 0 which assures exposure. OG Zero Price indicates the same for outgroup victims. The reference group are those who assigned a neutral article or a price of 100 points which means they were most likely not presented with the articles. The 'OG - IG' difference calculates the estimated difference in effect between the two groups. Its p-value was calculated using a T-test.

Table A.8: LATE Effects on Knowledge, Attitudes, and Empathy

	Agree: Thousands of children killed	Disagree: Most killed are militants	Empathy towards OG (Stated)	Empathy toward
IG Read	0.061	0.051*	-0.055	-0.
	(0.038)	(0.029)	(0.035)	(0.
OG Read	0.177***	0.040	0.115***	0.
	(0.041)	(0.031)	(0.040)	(0.
OG - IG	0.116***	-0.011	0.170***	0.0
(P-value)	(0.005)	(0.735)	(0.000)	(0.
Reference group mean	0.250	0.121	0.331	0.
Individual controls	X	X	X	
N	1717	1717	1717	1

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

The sample includes only participants from Israel who were assigned a reading price of either 0 or 100 points. Standard errors are robust. The table presents estimated 2SLS coefficients on the effect of reading articles discussing victims from the individual's ingroup or outgroup. IG Read indicates the individual read about ingroup victims (estimated via the assigned article and price). OG Read indicates the same for outgroup victims. The reference group are those who read a neutral article or nothing at all. The 'OG - IG' difference calculates the estimated difference in effect between the two groups. Its p-value was calculated using a T-test.

Table A.9: Persistence of the Effects on Knowledge, Attitudes, and Empathy

	Disagree: Most killed are militants	Agree: Thousands of children killed	Empathy towards OG (Stated)	Consider OG's S
IG Zero Price	-0.004	0.031	-0.015	-0.094***
	(0.022)	(0.026)	(0.024)	(0.030)
OG Zero Price	0.009	0.060**	0.051**	0.059*
	(0.022)	(0.026)	(0.026)	(0.035)
OG - IG	0.012	0.028	0.065**	0.153***
(P-value)	(0.603)	(0.320)	(0.012)	(0.000)
Reference group mean	0.144	0.234	0.273	0.209
Individual controls	X	X	X	X
N	1449	1449	1443	653

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

The sample includes only participants from Israel who were assigned a reading price of either 0 or 100 points. Standard errors are robust. The table presents estimated coefficients on the effect of assigned articles and prices. IG Zero Price indicates the individual was assigned to read about ingroup victims and the price of reading was 0 which assures exposure. OG Zero Price indicates the same for outgroup victims. The reference group are those who assigned a neutral article or a price of 100 points which means they were most likely not presented with the articles. The 'OG - IG' difference calculates the estimated difference in effect between the two groups. Its p-value was calculated using a T-test.

Table A.10: Heterogeneous Effects by WTP for All Ingroup and Outgroup Articles

	Agree: Thousands of children killed	Disagree: Most killed are militants	Empathy towards OG (Stated)	Emp
OG Zero Price	0.073***	-0.005	0.116***	
	(0.028)	(0.021)	(0.025)	
WTP Difference	0.037*	0.044***	0.026*	
	(0.020)	(0.013)	(0.015)	
OG Zero Price * WTP Difference	0.020	-0.047**	0.018	
	(0.027)	(0.019)	(0.022)	
Reference group mean	0.250	0.121	0.331	
Individual controls	X	X	X	
N	1064	1064	1064	

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

The table presents estimated coefficients on the effect of assigned articles whether they differ by individual differences in WTP valuations. OG Zero Price indicates the individual was assigned to read about outgroup victims. The reference group are those who were assigned an ingroup article. Treatment WTP Difference is the standardised difference between the two article groups' average WTP values calculated per person (IG victim articles - OG Victim articles). The sample includes only participants from Israel who were assigned a reading price of 0 and either an IG or OG victim article. Standard errors are robust.

Table A.11: Heterogeneous Effects by WTP for the Treatment Articles

	Agree: Thousands of children killed	Disagree: Most killed are militants	Empathy towards OG (Stated)	Emp
OG Zero Price	0.071**	-0.007	0.115***	
	(0.028)	(0.021)	(0.025)	
WTP Difference	0.016	0.051***	0.045***	
	(0.021)	(0.015)	(0.016)	
OG Zero Price * WTP Difference	0.021	-0.067***	0.005	
	(0.029)	(0.021)	(0.023)	
Reference group mean	0.250	0.121	0.331	
Individual controls	X	X	X	
N	1064	1064	1064	

* p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01

The table presents estimated coefficients on the effect of assigned articles whether they differ by individual differences in WTP valuations. OG Zero Price indicates the individual was assigned to read about outgroup victims. The reference group are those who were assigned an ingroup article. Treatment WTP Difference is the standardised difference between the two articles' WTP values calculated per person (IG victims - OG Victims). The sample includes only participants from Israel who were assigned a reading price of 0 and either an IG or OG victim article. Standard errors are robust.

B Additional Analysis

B.1 Headline Analysis Of Popular Arab and Israeli News Sites

In this section, we provide more details on our analysis of news articles appearing in Ynet and Al Jazeera (Figure 2). We focus on these news sites since Al Jazeera (aljazeera.net) is a a major pan-Arab news network. It is the most followed Arab news outlet on X (formerly Twitter) and the second most subscribed Arab news channel on YouTube. It was ranked second among the top online TV channels in the Arab world.[20]. Ynet (ynet.co.il) is the most visited news site in Israel, and has maintained this title for several years.

To analyze the articles in these websites we scraped their home pages between August 2023 and September 2024. We used the Internet Archive Wayback Machine (web.archive.org) to observe the website as they were captioned every day as close as possible to 8 AM and 8 PM (both sites are recorded regularly by the Wayback Machine). We then we recorded the top two headlines (including the subheadline) that appeared in each site in each caption.

Research assistants (native Arabic/Hebrew speakers) then characterized each headline and determined several attributes: Is the headline related to an active conflict or war, which war is the article related to, are there casualties mentioned in the headline, what is the identity of casualties (Israeli or non-Israeli Arab), and whether these casualties described as civilians, military personnel/combatants or Martyrs. Each headline could have more than one of these victim categorizations so an article mentioning both Israeli and Arab casualties is counted twice in Figure 2. The majority of the relevant headlines refer to the conflict in Gaza, but some refer to events inside Israel, in the West Bank, Lebanon, Iran or Yemen.

B.2 Mechanisms Explaining the WTP Gap in Jordan

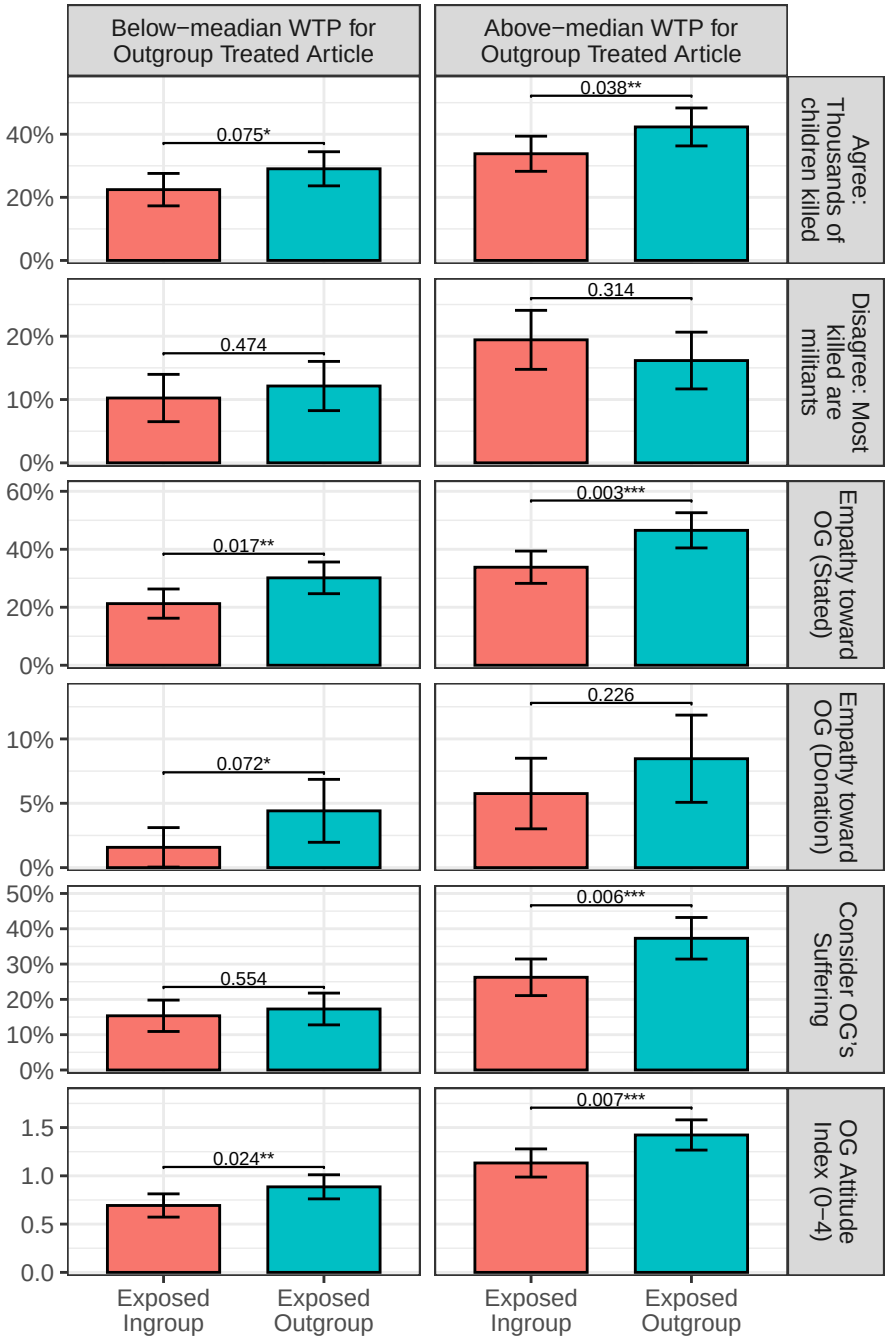
In Section 2 we discussed the main mechanisms explaining the gap in WTP for articles about ingroup outgroup victim articles in Israel. In this appendix, we discuss the mechanisms in Jordan using the same methods. Overall, we find similar results to the Israeli sample. The main difference is that in Jordan, reliability is also a major consideration explaining the WTP gap.

B.2.1 Informational considerations

Several pieces of evidence suggests that information consideration are not the main driver of the WTP gap, but reliability may still be an important consideration. First, Column (5) of Table A.6 shows that the gap in WTP persists even for articles about older events

[20]https://www.arabnews.com/media-list, https://www.forbesmiddleeast.com/list/top-tv-channels-online-in-the-arab-world/

Figure A.4: Heterogeneity by WTP Gap for between all Ingroup and Outgroup Articles

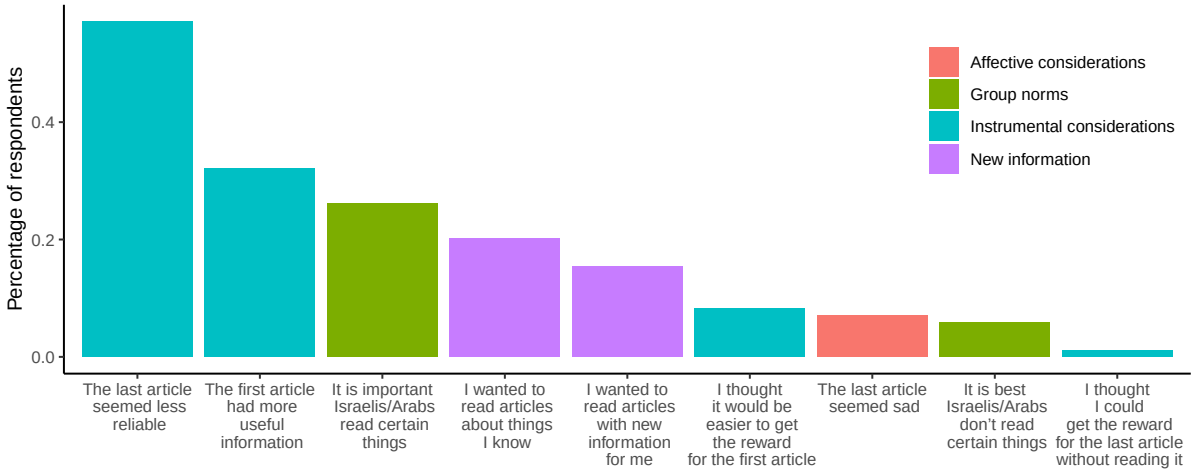


This figure present six main outcomes by treatment arms for the Israeli sample, for two subgroups based on their WTP. We calculate for each participant the difference between the WTP for outgroup articles and the WTP for ingroup articles, take the average across participants, and divide participants into two groups, those below the median, who are willing to pay less for outgroup articles compared to ingroup articles, and those above median, who are willing to pay more for outgroup articles. The figure present raw values along with the p-value of a comparison between Exposed Ingroup and Exposed Outgroup (without any control variables). *Exposed Ingroup* and *Exposed Outgroup* refer to participants who were assigned a zero price for the ingroup and outgroup article, respectively. The outcomes are defined in Section 2.1.4.

from the 2010s, where immediate instrumental value is minimal. Second, we use the article classification survey described in Section 2.2 to test whether participants provide a higher WTP for articles they are not familiar with. The results are very similar to the Israel sample. Column (2) of Appendix Table A.12 shows that participants actually display higher WTP for articles covering familiar events, contrary to what an information-value explanation would predict. Column (3) shows that article credibility is positively correlated with higher WTP (the effect is not statistically significant), but that even when controlling for credibility a large gap remains in WTP between ingroup and outgroup articles.

The main difference between the Israeli and Jordanian samples is that many more Jordanians mentioned instrumental consideration when asked why they offered a higher WTP for an ingroup victim article. Over 30% of participants mentioned that the article about outgroup victims seemed less reliable and close to 30% of victims mentioned that the article about ingroup victims contained more useful information. Appendix Figure B.3 shows that reliability was also the most common answer participants mentioned in the open-ended question asking them to explain their WTP considerations.

Figure B.1: WTP Rationales, Ingroup vs Outgroup Articles, Jordan

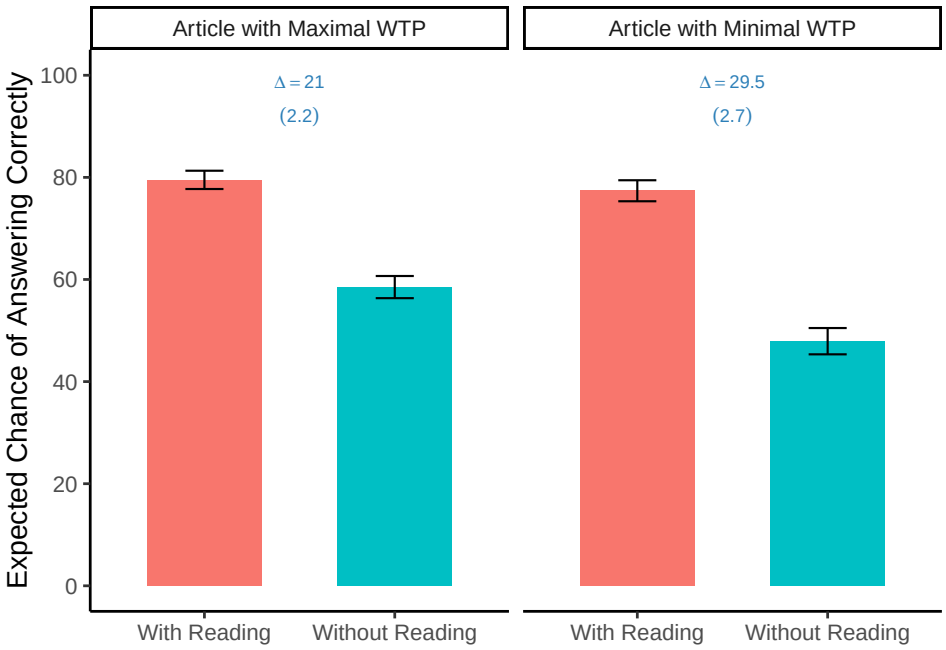


B.2.2 Monetary considerations

Monetary considerations do not seem to drive Jordanian's WTP. Appendix Figure B.1 shows that like the Israeli sample, only a small share of Jordanian participants reported that they offered a higher WTP to an ingroup articles compared to an outgroup article because they thoughts it would be easier to get the reward for the ingroup article or because they thoughts they could get the reward for the outgroup articles without reading it. The expected improvement in the probability of answering the quiz correctly and receiving the bonus payment also mirrors that in Israel. Figure B.2 shows that Jorda-

nian participants expected reading to improve their chances of answering correctly by 21 percentage points for the articles for which they were willing to pay the most , and by 29.5 percentage points for the articles for which they were willing to pay the least. This again goes against instrumental monetary consideration.

Figure B.2: Expected Chances of Wining Bonus Payment With and Without Reading (Jordan)



B.2.3 Universal afffective motives

We do not find that avoidance of negative feelings drives the WTP gap between ingroup and outgroup articlesWe leverage the classification survey and control for whether the article is expected to cause negative emotions. Column (3) of Appendix Table A.12 does not find that individuals pay less for articles expected to induce negative emotions. Moreover, Appendix B.1 shows that a relatively small share of participants reported offering a higher WTP to an ingroup article over an outgroup articles because the outgroup article seemed sad.

B.2.4 Social identity factors

Social identity considerations are also a key mechanism in Jordan. First, table 1 shows that the gap in WTP is significantly larger among participants who report high levels of pride in their ingroup, these result hold both when defining identity based on nationality (Israeli vs Palestinian) and when defining it based on religion or ethnicity (Jew vs. Arab). Second, column (7) of Table A.12 shows that controlling for whether participants think that it is important that people from their group will read an article ("Group norms") explains a substantial portion of both the positive effect for ingroup victims and negative

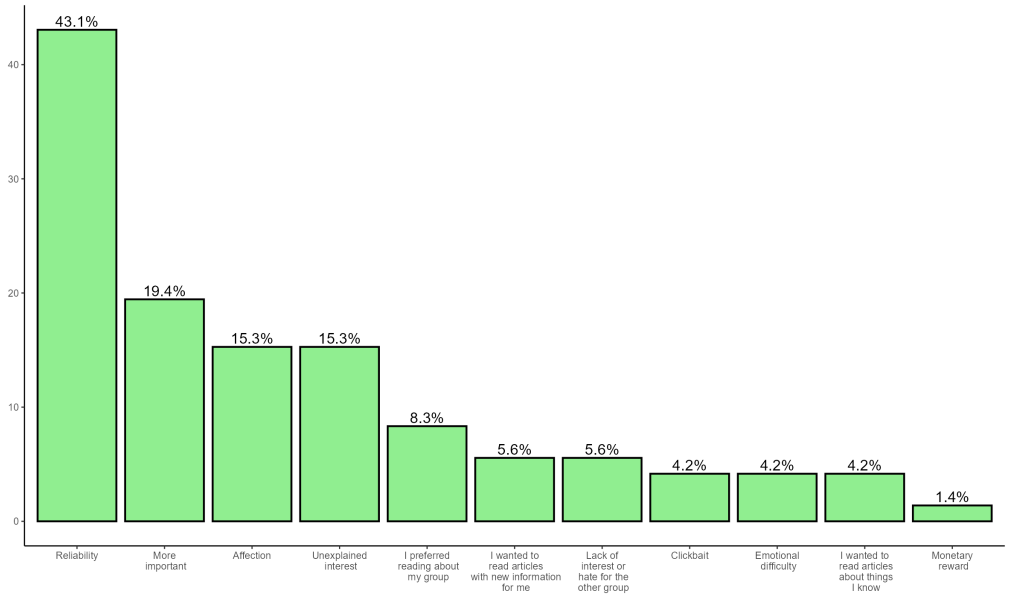
effect for outgroup victims). Third, like the Israeli sample, when Jordanians were asked directly about their rationales for giving high vs low WTP values, the most common answer mentioned injunctive group considerations (Appendix Figure B.1).

Table A.12: WTP Based on Classification of Articles, Jordan

	Dependent variable: WTP							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
IG Victim	13.179***	7.987***	12.257***	13.197***	14.744***	14.358***	4.124**	4.257***
	(0.788)	(1.287)	(1.673)	(1.619)	(2.564)	(1.68)	(1.671)	(1.43)
OG Victim	0.664	0.218	1.383	0.644	0.791	-0.026	-1.278**	-4.199***
	(1.03)	(0.716)	(0.927)	(1.267)	(0.979)	(0.709)	(0.497)	(0.761)
Familiarity		2.523***						1.48**
		(0.414)						(0.636)
Credibility			0.756					-1.502*
			(0.726)					(0.781)
Negative Emotions				-0.018				0.415
				(0.865)				(0.834)
IG Positive Image					0.74			1.53**
					(0.839)			(0.743)
OG Positive Image						-0.905		-1.575**
						(0.657)		(0.624)
Group Norms							4.038***	5.603***
							(0.691)	(0.817)
R^2	0.705	0.048	0.047	0.047	0.047	0.047	0.049	0.052

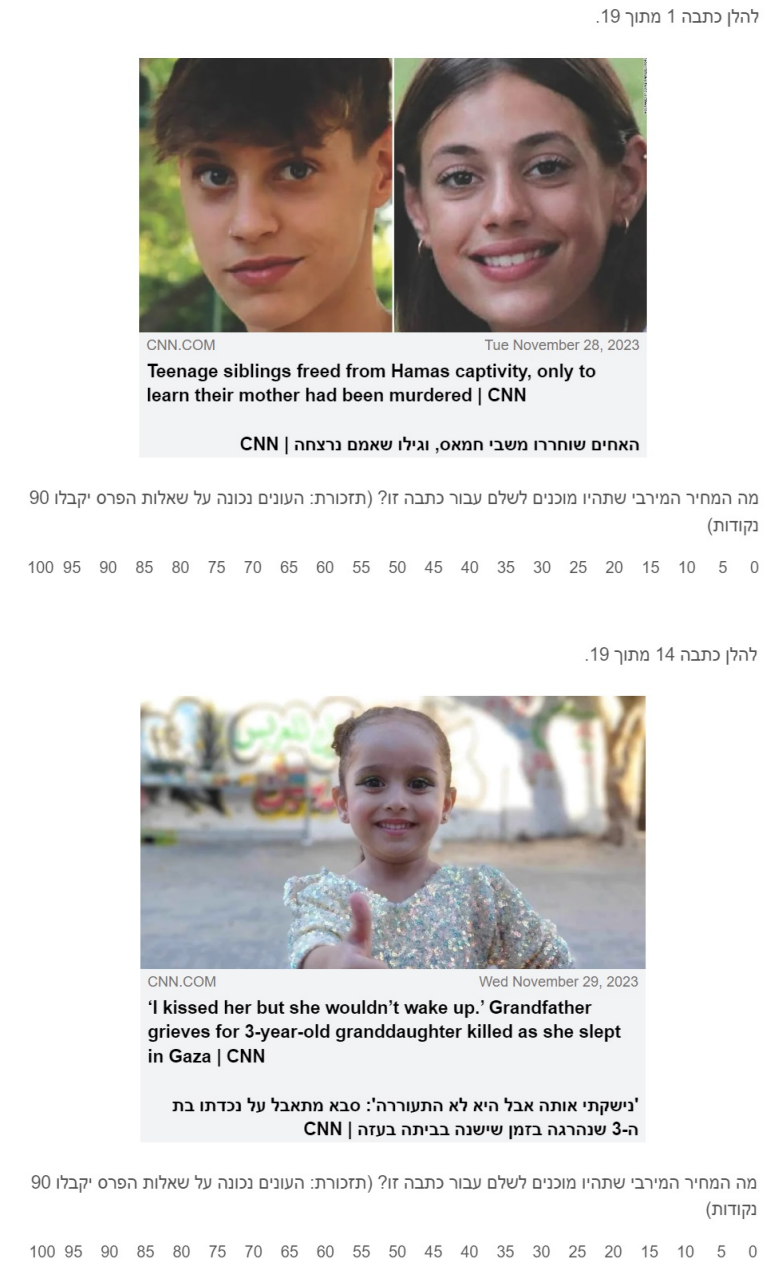
Note: All S.E. are clustered at individual, article levels. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
IG Victim and *OG Victim* are dummy indicators. All other coefficients refer to a S.D change in the article characterization score. All specifications use only the Jordanian dataset, with 3,582 observations.

Figure B.3: Consideration for WTP between Ingroup and Outgroup Article based on an Open-Ended Question, Jordan



C Survey Screenshots

Figure C.1: Willingness to Pay Elicitation



This figure displays examples of WTP elicitation from the Israeli survey. The two examples are for the two main treatment articles. The top text says "this is article X out of 19". We then present participants with the headline, along with its translation, and ask the following: "what is the maximum price you would be willing to pay for this article? (reminder: those answering the bonus questions correctly will receive 90 points)".

Figure C.2: Attention Check Question

This figure displays examples of an attention check from the Israeli survey. The top text says "this is article 15 out of 19" (the actual position was randomized). We then present participants with the headline and ask the following: "what is the maximum price you would be willing to pay for this article? (reminder: those answering the bonus questions correctly will receive 90 points)".

Figure C.3: Examples of Headlines Presented to Participants

C.1 Treatment Articles

C.1.1 Article about Gazan Victims

‘I kissed her but she wouldn’t wake up.’ Grandfather grieves for 3-year-old granddaughter killed as she slept in Gaza

Picking through the rubble of his destroyed home, Khaled Nabhan lifts a doll that had belonged to his granddaughter and kisses it.

Toys and memories are all he has left of his beloved grandchildren, 3-year-old Reem and 5-year-old Tarek, who were killed last week while they were sleeping in their bed.

Their home was brought down by what Nabhan said was a nearby Israeli airstrike in the Al Nuseirat refugee camp in southern Gaza. Nabhan has only just managed to return, following the pause in fighting.

Speaking to CNN from the ruins of his home, Nabhan described the final evening he had with his grandchildren, breaking down in tears as he recalled how they begged him to take them outside to play. He had refused because of the danger from Israeli airstrikes, he said.

“They kept asking for fruit but there is no fruit because of the war,” he said. Clutched in his hand was a tangerine that he’d given Reem as a treat, but that she never had the chance to eat. “I could only find them these tangerines.”

The family was asleep when the airstrike hit. Khaled said he woke up screaming for his children and grandchildren, struggling to walk through the dark and the wreckage to find them.

“I couldn’t find anyone, they were buried underneath all this rubble,” he said, standing on a bed in a room full of debris.

Nabhan showed CNN videos and photos of the family in happier times, of the children singing, laughing and playing. In one clip, Nabhan throws his granddaughter into the air and catches her while Reem giggles with delight. In another image, Nabhan grins while riding a bicycle, his granddaughter sits on the handlebars wearing a pretty yellow dress and white flowers in her hair.

The two were inseparable, he said. With their father abroad working, the family lived with their grandfather and he was Reem’s whole world.

Her favorite game was pulling his beard and he would pull her piggy tails, he said.

“I’ll let go, if you let go,” she says giggling in a video.

In the battered bedroom of their house in Gaza, Nabhan showed CNN where his daughter Maysa — Reem and Tarek’s mother — was sleeping when the house collapsed. She and her sister survived but were seriously injured.

Speaking to CNN from a relative’s house in Gaza where they are recuperating, Maysa said she remembered screaming and something heavy pinning her down.

“I heard Reem screaming next to me, I told her there is something heavy on top of me, I can’t reach you. I said my final prayers and next I woke up in the hospital,” she said.

Maysa woke up to the news her young children were gone. Their lifeless bodies were found together under the rubble.

“At the hospital I was just numb. I hugged them, I wanted to get as many hugs as I could. No matter how much I hugged them I didn’t get enough,” Maysa said

. For nearly seven weeks, most people in the Gaza Strip have been just trying to survive, focusing on the basics: finding shelter, fleeing the fighting, getting access to food and water.

The pause in fighting between Israel and Hamas has given many families in Gaza the chance to go outside, buy supplies and return home to retrieve belongings or even bury the bodies of their loved ones.

For many Gazans like Nabhan, the truce has also deepened the heartache as they take stock of their new, devastated surroundings. The weeks of airstrikes and fighting have left entire neighborhoods levelled to the ground and many are now able to see the full scale of the devastation for the first time.

More than 14,800 Palestinians, including 6,000 children, have been killed in Gaza since Israel launched its offensive in response to the Hamas terror attacks of October 7, according to figures from the Palestinian Ministry of Health in the West Bank, which draws its data from Hamas-run health authorities in the Gaza Strip.

Earlier this month, UN Secretary-General António Guterres said Gaza is “becoming a graveyard for children,” adding that “The nightmare in Gaza is more than a humanitarian crisis. It is a crisis of humanity.”

His comments came four weeks after Israel declared war on Hamas, following the Islamist militant group’s deadly October 7 terror attack that killed 1,200 people in Israel, mostly civilians, and saw about 240 others kidnapped and taken back to Gaza – the largest single day attack on Israel since the country’s founding in 1948.

The temporary truce has also brought joy as those hostages released by Hamas as part of the deal agreed last week finally returned to Israel and reunited with their families in heart wrenching scenes. Others still face an anxious wait for news of the fate of their loved ones, including multiple children, still held captive by militants in Gaza.

Grieving grandfather Nabhan says his grandchildren were too young to understand the war they lived and died in. He is not a fighter, he said, and his family had nothing to do with the war.

Now his grandchildren will never be able to dress up, play, or eat their favorite treats.

Nabhan was seen around the world in a widely shared video of his moment of grief last week as he kissed his lifeless 3-year-old granddaughter goodbye.

“I used to kiss her on her cheeks, on her nose and she would giggle,” he said. “I kissed

her but she wouldn't wake up."

In another social media video, the two children's bodies lay prepared for burial in white shrouds while Nabhan fixes Tarek's hair.

"I combed his hair like he would always ask me to, like a photo he would always show me," Nabhan said. "He loved his hair like that, now he's gone."

From his ruined home, Nabhan searches through his damaged possessions and bundles up armfuls of colorful toys — the loss etched into the lines of his face.

"I was wishing, hoping that they were only sleeping," he said. "But they weren't sleeping, they are gone.

C.1.2 Article about Israeli victims

Teenage siblings freed from Hamas captivity, only to learn their mother had been murdered

Throughout the 50 days Noam and Alma Or were held captive in Gaza, one thought kept the siblings going: reuniting with their mother, who they'd been separated from on October 7 during Hamas' brutal attacks on their community.

But when Noam, 17, and Alma, 13, were released together on Saturday, "this dream had been shattered by the fact that she was murdered," said the siblings' maternal uncle Ahal Besorai.

"My sister, their mom, was murdered on October 7. The children did not know that," he said, speaking to CNN from the Philippines. "We thought they were together when they were kidnapped, but they were separated from the outset."

"When they first crossed the border and reunited with their grandmother and older brother, the first news that they had to confront was the fact that their mom is no longer alive. And that was a terribly emotional and traumatic moment for them," Besorai added.

The siblings' father Dror remains missing, believed captive in Gaza.

Emily Hand, 8, was killed during Hamas' attack in Be'eri on Saturday.

The family had lived in the Be'eri kibbutz, a close-knit farming community of about 1,100 residents, located close to the Gaza border. But the idyllic kibbutz became the scene of bloodshed and devastation on October 7, as one of the main targets for Hamas militants who poured over the border and laid siege to nearby communities.

The militants murdered more than 120 Be'eri residents, including children, and kidnapped others. They set people's homes on fire, looted, stole and destroyed what they could. In total, some 1,200 people, most civilians, were slain by Hamas militants across southern Israel that day.

It was amid this chaos and terror that Noam and Alma were separated from their parents and taken hostage by Hamas. While in Gaza, they were taken to a house and kept in a room with another woman from their kibbutz, said Besorai, who also grew up in Be'eri.

He didn't describe in detail what the siblings had gone through, saying he didn't want to add to the burden of families with loved ones still held hostage. But, he said, "it wasn't pleasant, to say the least. It was horrible."

Hamas is believed to have held more than 200 hostages in Gaza prior to the releases negotiated with Israel. Under the breakthrough truce agreement, groups of Israeli citizens and other nationals have been freed every day since last Friday, while Israel has released Palestinian women and children detainees from its prisons, many of whom have never been charged or sentenced.

The initial four-day truce was extended by an additional two days on Monday, as stories began to trickle out from the families of freed hostages, giving the first insights into what life had been like in captivity.

Noam, Alma and the third woman in their room shared a diary, but the siblings weren't allowed to bring it with them during their release, said Besorai. In fact, they didn't realize they were being released at all, with Hamas taking measures to conceal that fact from the third hostage, he added.

A group of Israelis watch as a helicopter carrying hostages released from the Gaza Strip lands at the helipad of the Schneider Children's Medical Center in Petah Tikva, Israel, Sunday Nov. 26, 2023. The cease-fire between Israel and Hamas was back on track Sunday as the militants freed 17 more hostages, including 14 Israelis and the first American, in exchange for 39 Palestinian prisoners in a third set of releases under a four-day truce. (AP Photo/Leo Correa)

Militants took the siblings out of the room "on a ploy that they are going to the toilet, then handcuffed them, blindfolded them, took them to the car that took them to the place where they are being handed over to the Red Cross," said Besorai. "They tried to hide it from the lady who stayed behind, all on her own – so maybe (that) put some psychological pressure on her."

Even after what the siblings had endured, Noam – who Besorai described as a "beautiful person" – voiced compassion for those in crisis-stricken Gaza, where more than 14,800 Palestinians have been killed in Israeli attacks since October 7 according to data from Hamas-run health authorities there.

"When they were walking (from the Hamas vehicle) to the Red Cross, and they were holding hands, Noam told his sister Alma, that he just felt very sorry because they were surrounded by Gazans, civilians. He said, 'I feel so sorry for them because they are staying here, and we are going home,'" Besorai said.

Now that the siblings are free, the family is focused on their recovery; they lost weight over the past two months, but are otherwise "sort of okay," Besorai said. Still, he worries about the toll that captivity has taken on them, and the trauma that may linger.

"When I spoke to them, the first time I spoke to Alma, the 13-year-old niece, she had this enormously big smile and glittering eyes when she came to the Zoom call," he said.

"And this is what stuck in my head: What is behind these glittering eyes? What is deep inside them following this horrible ordeal? It is just very difficult for me to assess."

C.1.3 Article about neutral victims

Rescuers battle sub-zero temperatures as more than 130 killed by China's deadliest quake in nearly a decade

At least 131 people were killed and hundreds more injured after an earthquake hit northwest China, state media reported Tuesday, as rescue teams scrambled to reach survivors in sub-zero temperatures.

The quake, China's deadliest in nearly a decade, rocked Jishishan county in Gansu province late Monday night, destroying homes, damaging roads and knocking out power and communication lines. Rescuers raced to search for survivors trapped under rubble, while residents rushed outdoors, huddling overnight in the bitter winter cold.

As of Tuesday morning, the quake has killed 113 people and injured 772 others in Gansu, state broadcaster CCTV said. Nearly 15,000 houses collapsed and tens of thousands of people had to be evacuated, according to the broadcaster.

In the neighboring province of Qinghai, 18 people have died and 198 were injured, with 16 more others missing, according to local officials.

The quake struck just before midnight while many would have been sleeping in their homes. It measured 5.9-magnitude at the shallow depth just over 6 miles, according to the United States Geological Survey. The China Earthquake Networks Center (CENC) gave a slightly higher reading of 6.2 magnitude.

The epicenter is located close to the border between Gansu and Qinghai, a mountainous region on the eastern edge of the Tibetan plateau. The quake was followed by nine aftershocks at magnitude 3 and above as of Tuesday morning, according to the CENC.

Electricity was restored in Gansu and Qinghai provinces, CCTV reported Tuesday. It is crucial to the areas amid the current need for heating.

Forecasts suggest temperatures could dip to as low as -19 degrees Celsius (-2.2 degrees Fahrenheit) in certain parts of the area affected by the earthquake over the next three days, according to the China Meteorological Administration.

The initial tremors lasted nearly 20 seconds and were felt in the provincial capital of Lanzhou 102 kilometers (63 miles) away, CCTV reported.

University students in Lanzhou shared photos on social media site Weibo of crowds gathering outside their dormitories.

A student at Lanzhou University said when the quake struck, she went to hide in the bathroom with her roommates, before running down 12 floors amid violent shakes.

"I've never felt such strong tremors," she wrote in a Weibo post. "Wearing a down jacket, long underwear, and bare feet in slippers outdoors, where the temperature is lower than –10 degrees Celsius, (I'm) shivering with everyone."

Some village homes in Gansu and Qinghai have collapsed into rubble, with firefighters pulling survivors out of the debris in the dark, footage from CCTV showed.

The quake initially also cut off water and electricity supply as well as cell phone signals in some areas, complicating rescue efforts.

At least 4,000 firefighters, police officers and soldiers have been dispatched to the disaster zone in Gansu, along with thousands of tents, folding beds, quilts and portable fire pits, according to provincial officials. Rescuers conduct search and rescue operations after a 6.2-magnitude earthquake on December 19, 2023 in Jishishan Bonan, Dongxiang and Salar Autonomous County, Linxia Hui Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu Province of China.

In the epicenter of Jishishan, a county home to about 260,000 people, many rushed out of their homes to seek safety in open areas. Videos and images on state media and social media show families huddling together and wrapped in thick blankets on a public square.

A villager in Jishishan said she didn't have time to put on extra clothes and ran out barefoot, rushing past bricks and glass shattered on the ground.

"There was a loud 'boom' and the wall on the second floor collapsed. (I was) nearly hit and trapped inside," the villager told Jiupai News, a site affiliated with the state-run Changjiang Daily.

Authorities have set up tents at a temporary resettlement site on a square in Dahejia, a hard-hit town in Jishishan county, CCTV reported.

The lowest temperature in Jishishan was -14 degrees Celsius, or 6.8 degrees Fahrenheit, overnight, according to CCTV.

The below-freezing temperatures pose the "biggest challenge" to rescue efforts, Wang Duo, an expert involved in the rescue, told the state-run outlet China Newsweek. The first 72 hours are usually considered the "golden period" for rescue, but that precious window is shortened in this case due to the biting cold, Wang said.

Large swathes of China, including its northwest, have been gripped by a sudden cold snap in recent days, with temperatures plunging to near historic lows in some northern areas. Rescue workers search a house for survivors after an earthquake in Kangdiao village, Dahejia, Jishishan County, in northwest China's Gansu province on December 19, 2023.

Chinese leader Xi Jinping on Tuesday urged authorities to "make all-out efforts" to search for survivors and treat the injured, noting the disaster took place in a high-altitude area with cold weather, according to Xinhua.

China's Finance Ministry and Emergency Management Ministry allocated 200 million yuan ($28 million) in natural disaster relief funds to the two provinces hit by the quake, Xinhua reported.

China is no stranger to powerful quakes, especially in southwestern parts of the coun-

try where the Eurasian tectonic plate meets the Indian plate, a dramatic collision that creates the mighty Himalayas and the vast Tibetan plateau.

The quake is the deadliest to hit China in nearly a decade, according to publicly available reports, since an earthquake in the southwestern province of Yunnan killed around 600 people in 2014.

Yunnan's neighboring province, Sichuan, witnessed a devastating magnitude 7.9 earthquake in 2008 that killed some 90,000 people.